

Startling
Detective
Adventures



How I Solved

The Kent Murder Mystery

By Detective John P. Hoy

New Million Dollar Can Opening Machine!

Brand New Invention BRINGS FORTUNES TO AGENTS!

Here's Something Brand New! An Amazingly Simple Invention—Yet, Absolutely Revolutionary! For Now, At One Sweep, Millions of Old Style Can Openers Are Doomed to the Scrap Heap! Think of It, Men! A Tremendous New Opportunity for Quick Profits in Every Home in America! No Wonder Agents Are Making Astonishing, Almost Incredible Sums—\$75, \$100, \$150 in a Week Easily Right Along. So Mail the Coupon for All the Facts and Full Details of My Remarkable **FREE TEST OFFER!**

ABOUT once in a "Blue moon" some genius pops up with a new invention that everyone has been waiting for. Then, presto! Almost like magic agents' profits go soaring overnight to tremendous heights! And now the cold, hard-boiled facts about this amazing new can opener bear convincing proof!

More Than a Can Opener

This queer new device doesn't cut a ragged hole around the edge of the can. It lifts the entire top completely out, clean as a whistle! The machine holds the can—opens it—flips up the lid so you can grab it—and gives you back the can without a drop spilled, without any jagged edges to hack your fingers—all in a couple of seconds! You just put the can in the machine—turn the handle—and almost instantly the job is done! Built to do the job better than anything ever devised! Will last a lifetime! It's far more than just a can opener, it's a real **can-opening machine!**

The Secret of Big Money

Women hate the old style can opener—and with good reason, too. It's the last relic of barbarism in the modern kitchen. Yet every day millions of women have to open cans the dangerous, laborious old-fashioned way. Food is spilled and wasted. Fingers are cut and torn—often followed by infections and blood poisoning that result in expensive doctor bills. Opening cans the old way is a job nasty enough to make most any man swear—this amazing new way—it's so easy a ten-year-old child can do it with perfect safety! No wonder women—and men, too—simply go wild over it!

A Spectacular New Sales Plan

I want you to see this surprising new invention with your own eyes. I want you to know why everyone, man or woman, falls for it the instant they see it. Whether you are an experienced salesman, or never sold a penny's worth of anything in your life—I want to tell you about a remarkable new sales plan that wins you a profit on every call you make. This plan is made possible by another spectacular money maker in the Speedo line and guarantees you a steady income of up to \$150 a week!

Free Trial—Act Quickly

If you are ambitious—if a new, but tested and proved opportunity to make \$75 to \$150 in a week interests you—act at once before some other live wire beats you to this lifetime opportunity. Without obligation, learn about these amazing new patented inventions, and get my **FREE TRIAL OFFER**. Just mail the coupon today—**NOW!**

CENTRAL STATES MFG. CO.

4500 Mary Ave. Dept. C-2873 St. Louis, Mo.



Works Like a Charm

Just insert can in holder and turn crank. Top is cut completely out inside the "lid" of can. Juices can't spill out. So simple, a child can operate with perfect safety.



FULL TIME
\$265 In a Week

"Here is my record for first 30 days with Speedo:—June 13, 60 Speedos; June 20, 84 Speedos; June 30, 192 Speedos; July 6, 288 Speedos. Speedo sells to 9 out of 10 prospects."

M. Orloff, Va.
SPARE TIME

\$9 First Half Day
"The first afternoon I received my Speedo outfit I made \$9."

Mrs. R. Spain, Kans.
PART TIME

\$20 In 3 Hours
"I worked about 3 hours and took 25 orders. This is certainly a money-maker."

O. C. Gregg, Wyo.



No Jagged Edges

Speedo cuts the top out, smooth, slick and clean. Ends forever the danger of infection from fingers cut on jagged tin edges.



Food Pours Right Out

No fuss or muss. All food pours right out of can without scraping or "spooning." Even foods frozen in the can slip out easily.

SPEEDO

CENTRAL STATES MFG. CO.
4500 Mary Ave., Dept. C-2873,
St. Louis, Mo.

Yes, rush me the facts and details of your **FREE OFFER**.

Name

Address

City State.....

☐ Check here if interested only in one for your own home.

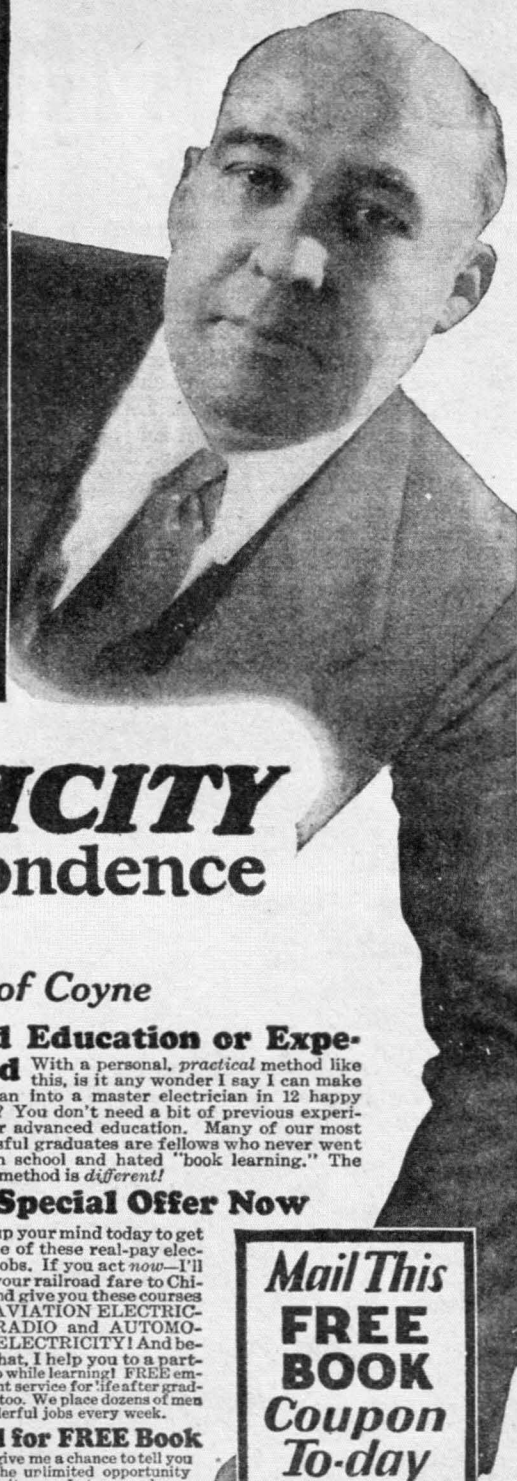


Are You Caught Behind the Bars of a "Small-Time" Job?

Why be satisfied with a "small-time" job at low pay? Why grind along at tiresome, uninteresting work with long hours and no future? Why take orders all your life from every Tom, Dick, and Harry who happens to be your boss?

Right now—this very minute—you hold the key to REAL SUCCESS in your hand. Hundreds of other

men before you have read of COYNE just as you are doing now—and are making \$50—\$75—\$150 a week as a result. This is your BIG CHANCE to get friendly help and practical training that will enable you to climb out of the rut, and EARN REAL MONEY! Don't miss it! Today may be the big turning-point in your whole life!



LEARN ELECTRICITY Without Books or Correspondence IN 12 WEEKS

By Actual Work—in the Great Shops of Coyne

SOME kinds of jobs ought to be labeled with a big sign that says "Man-killer." They are either so heavy, dirty and hard that they sap a man's strength and keep him dog-tired all the time—or else they are so disagreeable, uninteresting and poorly paid that they kill his ambition in almost no time. And AMBITION is the most valuable thing a man can have!

Fascinating Work— Real Pay!

That's why so many men are turning to ELECTRICITY, which offers unlimited rewards and opportunities—with ordinary salaries of \$50—\$75 and up a week! Right now big electrical jobs are actually going begging! Electrical experts are in demand—and the need is growing every day! The situation is one that spells O-P-P-O-R-T-U-N-I-T-Y in letters a foot high for the man who is wide-awake enough to see it!

Learn Quickly

Let me make you a trained electrician—the Coyne way. I've done it for thousands of others—farmers, laborers, factory men, and hundreds who haven't had more than 8th grade education! I can do it for you—and start you off on the road to independence and big earnings in just 90 days!

Not by Books

The secret of Coyne-training is that it is ALL PRACTICAL work. No books—no dry lessons—no useless theory. In the great shops of COYNE you learn the "ins and outs" of Electricity by actual work on real electrical equipment—the finest outlay in the country! And best of all—experts work right with you every step of the way, showing you all the electrical secrets that are essential to your success!

No Advanced Education or Experience Needed

With a personal, practical method like this, is it any wonder I say I can make any man into a master electrician in 12 happy weeks? You don't need a bit of previous experience or advanced education. Many of our most successful graduates are fellows who never went to high school and hated "book learning." The Coyne method is different!

Special Offer Now

Make up your mind today to get into one of these real-pay electrical jobs. If you act now—I'll allow your railroad fare to Chicago and give you these courses free! AVIATION ELECTRICITY, RADIO and AUTOMOTIVE ELECTRICITY! And besides that, I help you to a part-time job while learning! FREE employment service for life after graduation, too. We place dozens of men in wonderful jobs every week.

Send for FREE Book

Just give me a chance to tell you about the unlimited opportunity that awaits you. Let me send you this big book free, containing over 150 photographs and listing and telling you how you can qualify for the kind of jobs that lead to \$75 to \$200 a week. If you really want more money and a wonderful future, send for this book now! No obligation. Simply mail the coupon.

**Mail This
FREE
BOOK
Coupon
To-day**

Big Pay Jobs

are common in electricity. Our free employment bureau puts you in touch with openings to choose from. The following are only a few of the kind of positions you fit yourself for in the Great Shops of Coyne:

Farm Lighting Experts \$60 to \$100 a Week
Armature Expert \$50 to \$100 a Week
Power House Operator \$50 to \$75 a Week
Auto Electrician \$60 a Week and up
Inventor - Unlimited Income
Maintenance Engineer \$60 a Week and up
Service Station Owner up to \$200 a Week
Radio Expert, \$60 a Week and up
Contractor, \$3,500 to \$15,000 a Year

Special Reduced Tuition Offer

NOW—For a short time I am making a Special 30th Anniversary Offer. You can now get a real money-making training at the lowest price.

COYNE ELECTRICAL SCHOOL

500 S. Paulina St., Dept. 30-96 H. C. Lewis, Pres., Chicago

COYNE ELECTRICAL SCHOOL

H. C. LEWIS, Dept. 30-96
500 South Paulina Street, Chicago, Ill.

Dear Mr. Lewis:—I want the facts, so without obligation, send me your free illustrated catalog and details of your R. R. fare.

Name _____

Address _____

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THANK YOU FOR MENTIONING STARTLING DETECTIVE ADVENTURES.

Startling Detective Adventures

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April
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My
Seventeen
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Prison Rioters

By KAIN O'DARE

How I Captured Topeka's Girl Bandit

By EVERETT PROBASCO
Deputy Sheriff of Shawnee County,
Kansas.

Solving the Two-Million
Dollar Mail Robbery

By ROBERT FAHERTY

The Mystery of the
Mink Coat

By W. C. I. HALLOWELL

A score of other thrilling true
crime stories and features in
this issue.

ON SALE MARCH 10.

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"What? Learn Music by Mail?" they laughed



"Yes," I cried, "and I'll bet money I can do it!"

IT ALL started one day after lunch. The office crowd was in the recreation-room, smoking and talking, while I thumbed through a magazine.

"Why so quiet, Joe," some one called to me.

"Just reading an ad," I replied, "all about a new way to learn music by mail. Says here any one can learn to play in a few months at home without a teacher. Sounds easy, the way they tell about it."

"Ha, ha," laughed Fred Lawrence, "do you suppose they would say it was hard?"

"Perhaps not," I came back, a bit peeved, "but it sounds so reasonable I thought I'd write them for their booklet."

Well, maybe I didn't get a razzing then! Finally Fred Lawrence sneered. "Why, it's absurd. The poor fellow *really* believes he can learn music by mail!"

To this day I don't know what made me come back at him. Perhaps it was because I *really* was ambitious to learn to play the piano. Anyhow before I knew it I'd cried, "Yes, and I'll bet money I can do it." But the crowd only laughed harder than ever.

Suppose I Was Wrong

As I walked upstairs to my desk I began to regret my haste. Suppose that music course wasn't what the ad said. Suppose it was too difficult for me. And how did I know I had even the least bit of talent to help me out. If I fell down, the boys in the office would have the laugh on me for life. But just as I was beginning to weaken, my lifelong ambition to play and my real love of music came to the rescue. And I decided to go through with the whole thing.

During the few months that followed, Fred Lawrence never missed a chance to give me a sly dig about my bet. And the boys always got a good laugh, too. But I never said a word I was waiting patiently for a chance to get the last laugh myself.

My Chance Arrives

Things began coming my way during the office outing at Pine Grove. After lunch it rained,

and we all sat around inside looking at each other. Suddenly some one spied a piano in the corner. "Who can play?" every one began asking. Naturally, Fred Lawrence saw a fine chance to have some fun at my expense, and he got right up.

"Ladies and gentlemen," he began, "our friend Joe, the music-master, has consented to give us a recital."

That gave the boys a good laugh. And some of them got on either side of me and with mock dignity started to escort me to the piano. I could hear a girl say, "Oh, let the poor fellow alone; can't you see he's mortified to death?"

The Last Laugh

I smiled to myself. This was certainly a wonderful setting for my little surprise party. Assuming a scared look, I stumbled over to the piano while the crowd tittered.

"Play 'The Varsity Drag,'" shouted Fred, thinking to embarrass me further.

I began fingering the keys, and then . . . with a wonderful feeling of cool confidence . . . I broke right into the very selection Fred asked for. There was a sudden hush in the room as I made that old piano talk. But in a few minutes I heard a fellow jump to his feet and shout, "Be lieve me, the boy is *there!* Let's dance!"

Tables and chairs were pushed aside, and soon the whole crowd was shuffling around having a whale of a time. Nobody would hear of my stopping, least of all the four fellows who were singing in harmony right at my elbow. So I played one peppy selection after another until I finished with "Crazy Rhythm" and the crowd stopped dancing and singing to applaud me. As I turned around to thank them there was Fred holding a ten-spot right under my nose.

"Folks," he said, addressing the crowd again, "I want to apologize publicly to Joe. I bet him he couldn't learn to play by mail, and believe me, he sure deserves to win the money!"

"Learn to play by mail!" exclaimed a dozen people. "That sounds impossible! Tell us how you did." I was only too glad to tell them how I'd always wanted to play but couldn't afford a teacher, and couldn't think of spending years in practice. I described how I had read the U. S. School of Music ad, and how Fred bet me I couldn't learn to play by mail.

"Folks," I continued, "it was

the biggest surprise of my life when I got the first lesson. It was fun right from the start, everything as simple as A-B-C. There were no scales or tiresome exercises. And all it required was part of my spare time. In a short time I was playing jazz, classical pieces, and in fact, anything I wanted. Believe me, that, certainly was a profitable bet I made with Fred."

Play Any Instrument

You too, can now teach yourself to be an accomplished musician—right at home—in half the usual time. You can't go wrong with this simple new method which has already shown over half a million people how to play their favorite instruments *by note*. Forget that old-fashioned idea that you need special "talent." Just read the list of instruments in the panel, decide which one you want to play and the U. S. School will do the rest. And bear in mind no matter which instrument you choose, the cost in each case will be the same—averaging just a few cents a day. No matter whether you are a mere beginner or already a good performer, you will be interested in learning about this new and wonderful method.

Send for Our Free Booklet and Demonstration Lesson

Thousands of successful students never dreamed they possessed musical ability until it was revealed to them by a remarkable "Musical Ability Test" which we send entirely without cost with our interesting free booklet.

If you are in earnest about wanting to play your favorite instrument—if you really want to gain happiness and increase your popularity—send at once for the Free Booklet and Free Demonstration Lesson which explain this remarkable method. The booklet will also tell you all about the amazing new *Automatic Finger Control*. No cost—no obligation. Sign and send the convenient coupon now. Instruments supplied when needed, cash or credit. U. S. School of Music, 1243 Brunswick Bldg., N. Y. C.

U. S. SCHOOL OF MUSIC
1243 Brunswick Bldg., New York City

Please send me your free book, "Music Lessons in Your Own Home," with introduction by Dr. Frank Crane, Free Demonstration Lesson and particulars of your easy payment plan. I am interested in the following course:

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Name

Address

City State

What Instrument for You?

Piano	'Cello
Organ	Guitar
Violin	Piccolo
Banjo	Hawaiian
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5-String or	Drums and
Tenor)	Traps
Clarinet	Mandolin
Flute	Sight Singing
Harp	Ukulele
Cornet	Trombone
	Saxophone
	Harmony and Composition
	Voice and Speech Culture
	Automatic Finger Control
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	Italian and German
	Accordion

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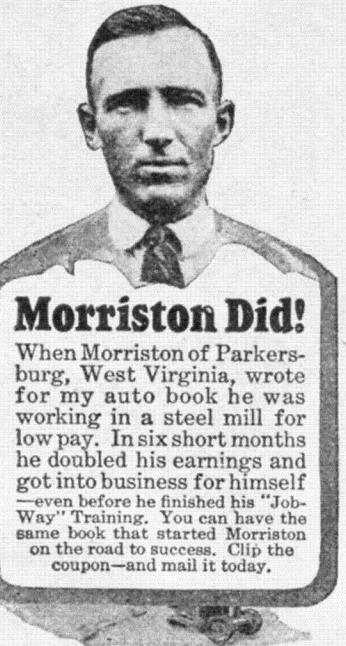
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**If You Want Quick Success
and Big Pay in AUTOS**



Earn Up to \$100 a week

Get YOUR share of the \$7,000,000,000 spent every year on auto upkeep. Just think of it—more than 25,000,000 autos in the U. S. No wonder there are so many big pay jobs! Get into this fascinating game, now. Don't put it off another day. Get the facts. Mail coupon for big, FREE auto book. Learn of the countless opportunities in the World's Biggest Business where real jobs and big pay come quick. See how \$50—\$75—\$100 a week is possible for you now. Learn how "Job-Way" Training has brought big money—promotion—shops of their own to scores of men. Find out about my Employment Department—how it helps you get a good job in the auto business.



Morrision Did!

When Morrision of Parkersburg, West Virginia, wrote for my auto book he was working in a steel mill for low pay. In six short months he doubled his earnings and got into business for himself—even before he finished his "Job-Way" Training. You can have the same book that started Morrision on the road to success. Clip the coupon—and mail it today.

AVIATION COURSE

and **3 Working Outfits**
also included **FREE** of
extra charge if you Act Quick!

Learn at Home in Spare Time



"Job-Way" Training is the short cut to Auto Success. No need to quit your present job—no need to leave home—just use your spare time to prepare for a brilliant future—a real job paying up to \$100 a week. All you need is common schooling. I don't care if you never touched an auto before, I can train you at home. You should be able to make extra money quick—a few weeks after starting. Men from all walks of life who worked long, hard hours for low pay are becoming garage owners, foremen and superintendents. If you like autos—if

you're between 15 and 55—get the facts now. "Job-Way" Training covers everything about autos—Mechanical and Electrical Work, Starting, Lighting, Ignition, Welding, Vulcanizing, etc.—Everything you need to get in line for a big money job as an Electrical and Mechanical Auto Expert.

It's the trained man who gets the good jobs and "Job-Way" Training is COMPLETE yet so simple, so easy that you get it quick.

Free Send COUPON for AUTO BOOK

Get my FREE Auto Book. Learn how "Job-Way" Training has brought success to hundreds. See what it can do for you. Find out how my Employment Department helps you get a good job—about the three big outfits you get. Read my money-back agreement, my aviation course offer and many other features.

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Dept. 3873 EVANSTON, ILLINOIS
(CHICAGO'S LARGEST SUBURB)

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Now!**

Don't delay another day. Clip the coupon before you turn this page. Take the first step to a big-pay auto job now.

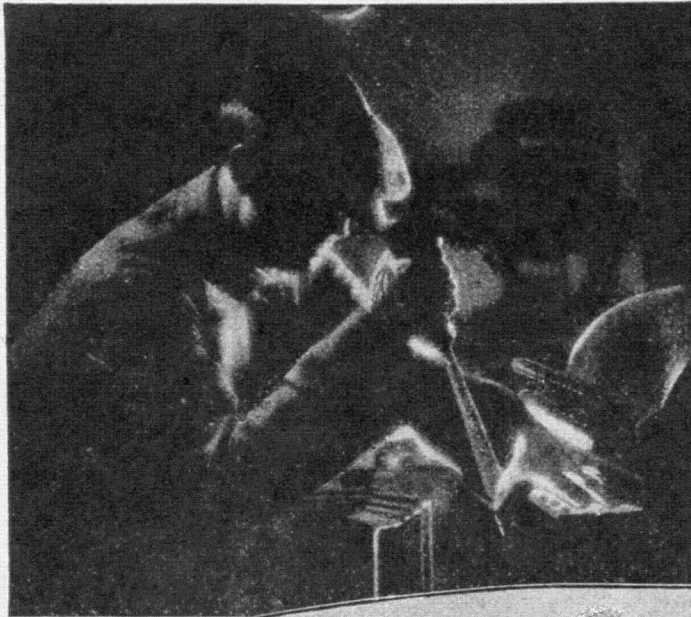
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Send me your free auto book. I want to succeed in the auto business. Tell me about "Job-Way" Training—about your Employment Department, extra Aviation Course, and your 3 testing and repair outfits offer. No obligation on my part whatever.

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Age.....Occupation.....

He Left His Calling Card

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Written In Blood!



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Make \$2500 to \$10,000 a Year**

Finger Print Experts solved every one of these weird, blood-curdling crimes! Finger Print Experts gathered in the great big rewards—were appointed to high official positions for their work! Every day more and more trained men are needed. New Bureaus of Identification, new positions are opening up all the time. The field is uncrowded! Opportunities are unlimited!

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The Knock of Opportunity

Is the knock of the postman as he brings this book, "Finger Prints," to you. It brings you fascinating true detective stories. And more! It tells you how YOU can become a Finger Print Expert quickly and easily—at home, by mail—and at a very small cost—made still easier by our liberal Easy Terms. Mail Coupon NOW!

Institute of Applied Science
1920 Sunnyside Ave., Dept. 65-23 Chicago, Ill.

THREE bloody finger prints on the cash register! He might as well have left his calling card—his doom was already written! These silent witnesses told the story—identified him—convicted him! Live through these thrilling adventures right with Detective McDonald as he gets Arizona's first finger print conviction. Mail the coupon below and get this gripping story **FREE**, with 12 others just as exciting!

13 True Detective Stories—FREE!

Gripping Mysteries! Gruesome Tragedies! Daring Deeds! Hair - Raising Climaxes! Every story will thrill you—grip you! You won't be able to lay it down until you have finished.

Think of it! Real Secret Service Operators give you "inside dope" on real crime cases. They reveal their secret workings—how they solved big crimes that baffled the police all over the country—how they won handsome rewards! These stories are **YOURS FREE!**—if you act quick! You would pay a good sum for them at a bookstore or news-stand. Here they are yours—**FREE**—for the asking. Mail the Coupon NOW!

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Without any obligation whatever, send me your new, fully illustrated, **FREE** book of authentic detective tales, "Finger Prints;" also full details of your low prices and Easy Payment Plan.

Name

Address

City and State Age

... The Book That Zealous Reformers Once Burned in Public!



At Last!

Censorship No Longer Denies You This Thrill of Thrills—

Tales from THE GREAT DECAMERON...

YOU'LL never know life until you've read this greatest of all forbidden books! You'll never know how utterly stark and vivid a picture of human passions can be painted in words until you've feasted on the most fascinating tales from the greatest of all true-to-life books—the immortal Decameron of Boccaccio!

Between its pages, the thrill of a lifetime of reading awaits you. Before your very eyes is unfolded the glittering pageantry of a golden age now vanished—an age when passion, intrigue and high-riding romance held full sway. Past you, in a breath-taking parade, sweep some of the most beautiful, yet unprincipled, women of all time—women whose intense fascination fired men's blood and even altered the fates of empires . . . Here you will find tales of scarlet days, when a robust world drank of life and love to its very dregs!

Few writers have ever dared to write so intimately of the frailties to which the flesh is heir. But the flaming pen of Giovanni Boccaccio knew no restraint. Sophisticated and fearless to the ultimate degree, his stories are not only brilliant fiction of the most gripping variety—but also the most illuminating record of life in fourteenth-century Italy ever penned. Hardly a detail of these stirring times escaped his watchful eye—and what he saw, he wrote, without hesitation or fear!

Mystery No Longer Shrouds This Brilliant Masterpiece!

Perhaps no other book ever written has had such an amazing history. Written in so vigorous a style as to be actually *startling*, it has long

been a storm center of fierce controversy and even persecution. Critics and the *haute-monde* have acclaimed it with unstinted praise for its sparkling vividness and subject matter—while prudish zealots and tyrannical reformers, aghast at the utter frankness with which Boccaccio exposed human life and love in the raw, resorted to every possible means to keep this masterpiece from general circulation. At one time they actually went so far as to gather all the available copies and have them publicly burned!

But all that was yesterday! Today the thrill that awaits the reader within the glowing pages of Decameron Tales is no longer denied you. This is the age of *reason*—and the peerless word-

artistry of genial old Boccaccio has come into its own at last! . . . Now, for a short time only, you can inspect these great examples of realistic writing in your own home for five days, without obligation.

A Literary Treasure-House

Rich in fascinating plot, tense with action and vibrant with human passion—the Decameron has

furnished plots for the world's great masters of literature. Longfellow, Keats, Dryden, Chaucer, and even the great Shakespeare himself sought these immortal pages for inspiration. In no other volume are the morals and customs of Italy of the fourteenth century so graphically laid before you—he way people lived, the hovels and palaces they dwelt in, the fantastic pleasures they indulged in—all are told with both wit and pathos that are indescribable. Thus the stories not only amuse and entertain, but constitute a landmark of literature which must not be passed over if you would broaden your vision—make yourself truly cultured.

SEND NO MONEY —5-DAYS' FREE TRIAL

And now we are enabled to offer you these great classics—thirty-five of the best stories from the famous Decameron—for the amazingly low sum of only \$1.98! Send no money—just fill out and mail the coupon below. When the package arrives pay the postman \$1.98, plus few cents postage. Inspect this great book for five days, then if you are not delighted return it and your money will be refunded. Mail the coupon this instant before this low price offer is withdrawn! Franklin Publishing Company, 800 No. Clark St., Dept. C-620, Chicago.

Franklin Publishing Co.,
800 N. Clark St., Dept. C-620, Chicago.

Please send me a copy of The Tales from the Immortal Decameron by Boccaccio. When package arrives I will pay postman only \$1.98, plus few cents postage. If not delighted, I am at liberty to return the volume within five days and my money will be refunded.

Name.....

Address.....

City..... State.....

If you may be out when the postman calls, enclose \$2 with this coupon and we will pay all delivery charges. Customers outside U. S. must send cash with order.

\$375000 REWARD

Find the key to unlock
this **PRIZE** Bag of Gold



THERE are 19 keys pictured here. To be sure, they all look alike, but, examine them closely. 18 of them are exactly alike, but, "**ONE**," and only one is DIFFERENT FROM ALL THE OTHERS. It is the key to OPEN THE PADLOCK on this \$3,750.00 FREE "Bag of Gold."

**SEE IF YOU
CAN FIND IT?**

© 1930 by J. L. Decker
Clues The difference may be in the size, the shape, or even in the notches. So, **STUDY EACH KEY CAREFULLY** and if you can find the "**ONE**" key that is different from all the others **SEND THE NUMBER OF IT TO ME AT ONCE**. You may become the winner of a Special Buick Sedan or \$3,750.00 cash money,—without one cent of cost to you. I will give away **ABSOLUTELY FREE**,—5 new six-cylinder 4-door Sedans and the winners can have **CASH MONEY** INSTEAD of the automobiles if they prefer it. **15 BIG PRIZES TO BE GIVEN FREE**—totaling \$7,500.00 cash.

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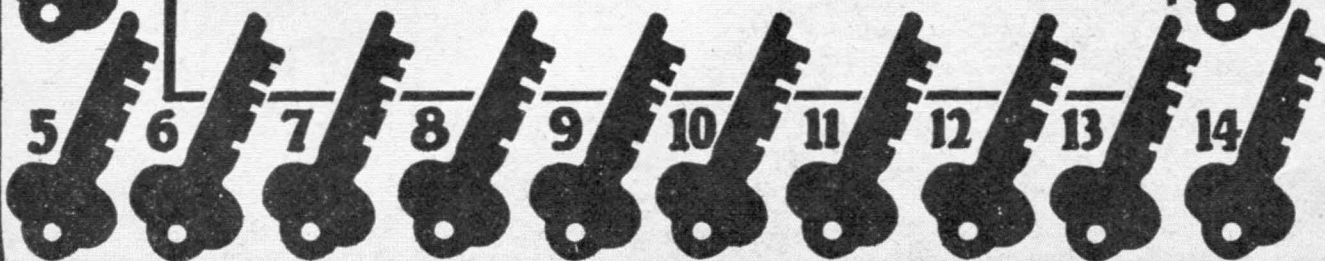
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ELINOR GLYN
"The Oracle of Love"

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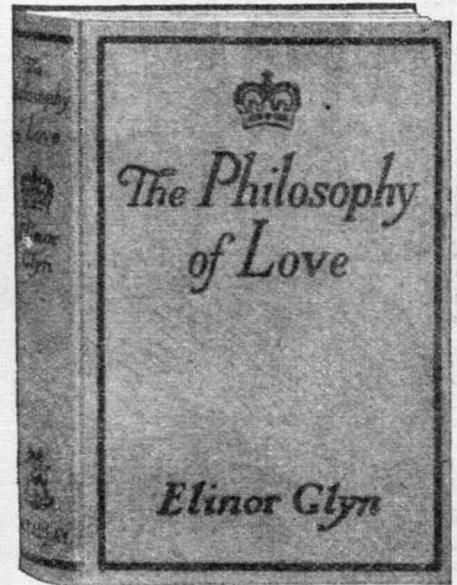
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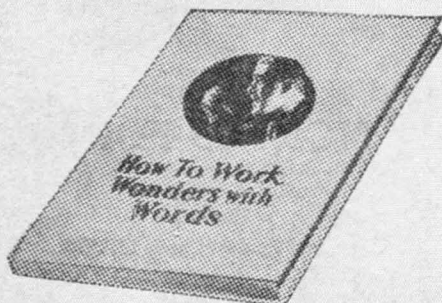
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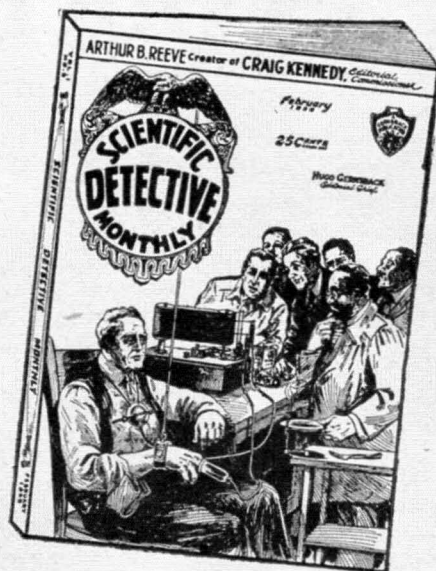
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ONE exciting night—a murder, a robbery—and not a clue left behind. Members of the household were unable to give any motive for the deed and the only evidence was that the crime had been committed by a vicious and clever criminal.

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The Chief's Chair

His Crime Panacea

REV. DR. LOUIS T. GROSS, New York prison reformer, declaring that the courts, churches, law and penal institutions have made a sorry failure at solving the crime problem, believes the solution lies in a general resort to psychiatry. He finds cussedness innate in human beings, attributes prison riots to the bitterness of men suffering from the barbaric and savage laws of retaliation, declares criminals are not born such but become so through social maladjustment and insists that Baumes laws which fight hatred with hatred, only foster crime. He would summon the science of psychiatry to make us over into love-one-anothers.

If Dr. Gross is wrong still he is right for several reasons. One is that his plan is unlikely ever to be adopted and another that no two psychiatrists ever could be found to agree as to diagnosis and treatment. Another is that if it were attempted all other functions of government would have to be set aside except tax collecting to pay the cost.

Speeds Crime News

TELETYPEs have been installed in the Philadelphia police department with wire connections throughout the eastern end of Pennsylvania and through the State Police to all the leading cities of the state. Within a few minutes after the commission of a crime its details and descriptions of its perpetrators, if available, will be automatically printed in police stations throughout the state. This scheme is devised to thwart the ever increasing automobile escapes of criminals and their apprehension when they have got a start on the local police. The teletype will be easily able to head off bandit cars capable of a speed of sixty-five miles an hour, as police say the principal details of crimes are in possession of police usually within fifteen minutes after a crime has been committed.

Our Clubby Prisons

EDGAR WALLACE, English writer of mystery thrillers, who has recently "seen" America, declares American prisons are not prisons, but clubs. To his English amazement he saw prisoners wearing screaming neckties, gay-colored gloves and other attire designed to give relief to the dreary drab of their convict clothes.

"Convicts and warders in a great American prison are just boys together," Wallace told ship news reporters on his return to England. "The prisoners come out into the exercise yard smoking cigars and doing much as they like."

In England when a judge sentences a criminal to prison he takes away more than his liberty—he takes away his cigarettes, cigars, pipe, and chewing tobacco. But he gives him something that convicts in America are not given and that's the lash with a cat o' nine tails. It has even been said that in England a murderer is executed on Friday and tried on Saturday.

Bobbed Bandit Free

CECILIA COONEY, the first of the bobbed-haired bandits of the automatic pistol age, whose numerous storekeeper victims in Brooklyn, N. Y., back in 1924 testified to her "wicked eye" as they gazed shiveringly into the barrel of her gun, has been released from Auburn prison in New York state. And her husband has been released from Sing Sing. They robbed scores of chain stores at closing hours, yet

(Continued on page 91)

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The Santa Claus

After a bandit garbed as St. Nicholas led an attack on the First National Bank of Cisco, Texas, blazing shotguns, the electric chair, and the lynching rope brought the fatalities to six.

IT WAS two days before Christmas 1927, the air was ringing with happy greetings and there were throngs of shoppers, their arms laden with bundles, hurrying along Main street in the West Texas town of Cisco. A group of children, with sparkling eyes, stood around a Santa Claus and told the old gentleman, as he stroked his whiskers, the gifts they wanted him to leave in their stockings.

Now this St. Nicholas was different in appearance from most conceptions of the jolly old fellow for he was remarkably slender and beneath the long red robe of cheap, flimsy material that was edged with cotton, there appeared ordinary trousers and shoes.

As he strolled away from the group of children, a bright-eyed little girl across the street saw him.

"Mama, I want to talk to Santa Claus," said the six-year-old child and she and her mother, Mrs. B. P. Blasengame, hurried across.

Just as they reached the sidewalk, the old bewhiskered fellow walked in the First National Bank.

"Hello, Santa Claus," said Alex Spears, the cashier, who was seated at his desk talking to Marion Olson, home from Harvard for the holidays.

The visitor did not reply to the greeting and Spears spoke again. Mrs. Blasengame and her little daughter had followed Santa Claus into the bank and everyone was looking at the patron saint of the Christmas-tide so that three strangers were unobserved as they entered, until one of them barked out: "Stick 'em up, everybody!"

For a moment, everyone—bank patrons and employees—thought it was a joke. But the sight of three determined looking men with pistols was convincing. One bandit stood guard just inside the front door. Another covered the customers and Spears while the third one stepped up to the teller's window where a business man



The First National Bank of Cisco, scene of the holdup. Two officers were fatally wounded in the alley at the right.



Cy Bradford, veteran peace officer, who wounded three of the bandits.

was making a deposit and said to Jewell Poe, the teller, "Stick 'em up, big boy; I mean it."

Mrs. Blasengame hastened with little Frances into the bookkeeping room and unlocked a side door opening into an alley. She unhooked the screen, told the little girl to hurry and then dashed out although one of the bandits shouted "Stop or I'll shoot." The brave woman heard a shot but ran across the alley and across a vacant lot to the police station, bursting into headquarters with the news that the bank was being robbed.

While all this was happening, Santa Claus entered Spears' office and, after searching the cashier and the other men for weapons, stepped into the teller's cage, obtained a .45 Colt automatic that was under the drawer and then ordered the teller, "Come back here and open this safe."

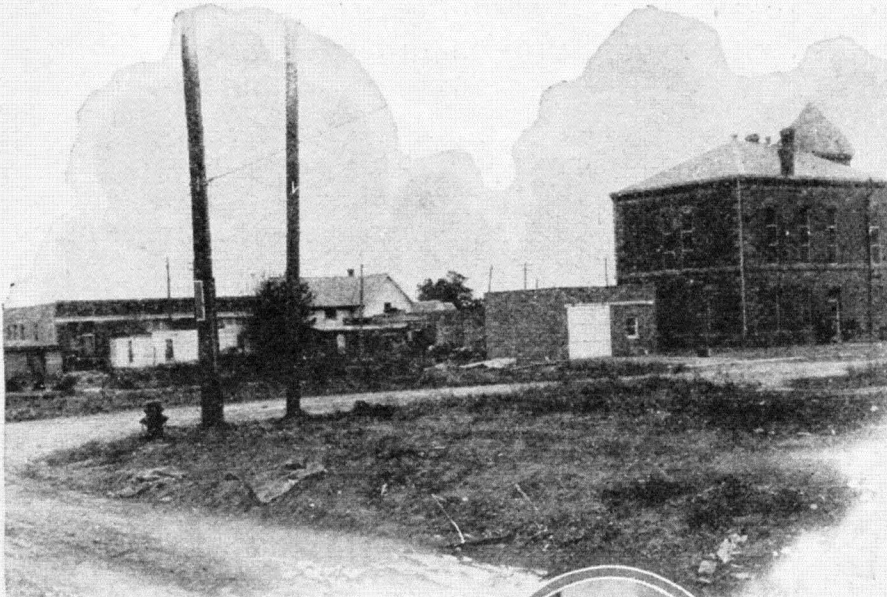
As Poe was carrying out the command, one of the bandits was herding other employees and customers to the bookkeeping room.

Santa Claus drew from under his clothes a tow sack bearing the lettering, "Idaho Potatoes," and stuffed it with \$12,200 in cash and \$150,000 in securities.

Henry Helms, the bandit who had covered the teller, took up his position at the door opening into the alley and

Bank Robbery

By BOYCE HOUSE, Editor of the Ranger, (Texas,) *Times*



Marshall Ratliff, pseudo Santa Claus, was taken from the Eastland County Jail, at right, and lynched from the guy wire in the foreground.

when Police Chief Bedford ran up to the east end of the alley and Officers Carmichael and Redies were at the rear of a building opposite the bank, Helms began shooting up and down the alley. He had a pistol in each hand and would kick the screen open, then shoot first one way and then the other. The roar of guns and the crack of pistol fire from without burst forth and citizens, hearing the fusillade, seized pistols and took up positions of vantage.



Henry Helms, four-gun bandit, who was electrocuted.

Attempting An Escape

THE robbery had been completed, the loot had been obtained but the get-away had not been effected. The bandits did not hesitate but herded the bank force and citizens out into the alley, using them as shields. One bandit marched behind young Olson and, with his hand out in front of the college student, blazed away with an automatic. Santa Claus forced the young woman bookkeeper to walk out ahead of him. As Robert Hill, the last of the robbers, started out of the bank door, several shots came whistling in and the bank employe jumped back. Hill pressed a pistol into his back and ordered him out.

Spears was wounded in the jaw when he emerged

into the alley. Olson was shot in the leg. They were ordered into the bandit car, a big sedan, which was in the alley. Spears said he was shot and refused. The young woman bookkeeper ran. The wounded Olson was forced into the car and when he protested that he was shot, one of the robbers gruffly said, "Lean back there on that seat and shut up, or I'll kill you." But Olson threw open the door, jumped out and ran.

Two little girls, Emma May Robinson, 10, and Laverne Comer, 12, had been in the bank and were forced out into the rain of lead by the bandits. When Emma May started to run, Santa Claus seized her and thrust her in the car. The other child was placed in the automobile and one of the robbers shot around her at the officers and citizens.

R. L. Day, a restaurant owner, had arrived on the scene without a weapon so he took a pump gun from the hand of another citizen, marched steadily up the alley toward the bandit machine and aimed it squarely at Hill, who was at the steering wheel, and then Day asked:

"How do you work this darned thing, anyhow?"

Hill started the car and, with a roar, it swung sharply out of the alley, almost hurling little Emma May out of an open door.

In the alley where the battle had raged with approximately 200 shots having been fired, two officers—Chief Bedford and Policeman George Carmichael—lay dying, and six citizens had sustained wounds.

South on Main street the machine rushed until Hill brought it to a stop at the city limits as a tire was flat and holes had been shot in the gasoline tank.

One of the bandits stopped a car driven by Woodrow Wilson Harris, 14 years old. In the car were the lad's parents and his grandmother. They were ordered out, but the quick-thinking schoolboy turned the ignition switch first, automatically locking the car.

The robber gang



Jailer Pack Kilborn, who overpowered Ratliff in an attempted jail break, and his daughter, who aided her father with a pistol.

transferred their loot and Louis Davis, bandit who was badly wounded, into the commandeered car. Then they found it would not start and pursuers were sending bullets humming around them. Hill returned the fire and was shot in the arm.

They sprang back into their car and dashed on, taking the little girls with them, but being compelled to abandon their dying comrade, Davis, and the sack of loot.

Off Through the Brush

THEY turned on to a country road and as they jolted along, Hill asked, "Are any of you hurt?" and Santa Claus replied, "I have a bad chin." One of the little girls looked back and saw blood on his chin. She recognized him as Marshall Ratliff of Cisco, before he jerked the mask over his face again.

After going several miles, the car turned off the road but soon encountered impenetrable brush. Not far away could be heard pursuing cars. The robbers jumped from their machine and told the little girls to lie down in the car and cover their eyes with their hands. Then the three men disappeared into the wasteland, leaving the Santa Claus suit behind.

Several hundred members of a posse began a search of the region but bushes, cactus and stunted oaks grew so thickly that a man could not be seen at a distance of six paces. Soon after the bandits vanished into the wilderness, Hill fainted from pain and loss of blood and the posse came near the desperadoes, but they lay motionless and silent and were not seen.

When darkness fell, Hill and Helms showed cool nerve by going back into Cisco, an armed camp which was the hub of the intensive search for them, stole a car and returned for Ratliff who, besides the wound in the chin, also had received a bad wound in the leg.

Then began a twisting journey down side roads and obscure lanes to avoid the scores of cars filled with determined men.

On Sunday night—the robbery had been committed Friday at noon—they wrecked the stolen car and Helms went to a farmhouse some twenty miles northwest of Cisco and asked a farmer to aid him as he had had a wreck and must take his wife to a doctor. The farmer offered Helms a car and the farmer's son and nephew got in to accompany the bandit. As they were driving off, the farmer called and the nephew jumped out but Helms drew a pistol and prevented Carl Wylie from escaping. The elder Wylie fired and wounded his son in the arm.

A short distance away, Ratliff and Hill appeared from behind the brush and climbed into the car. Wylie was compelled to accompany the outlaws as they wandered around until daylight and then they made their way to a lonely pasture where they remained all day. The robbers had two or three shotguns, a rifle, many pistols and a sack of ammunition, Wylie afterward related. They also had two oranges but did not offer him one nor did they build a fire though the day was very cold.

That night they resumed their dodging tactics and by a roundabout route—several times narrowly eluding cars of searchers—they doubled back to Cisco, the scene of the robbery.

Here the crippled Ratliff remained in the car to guard Wylie while Helms and Hill went to steal another car. They returned with a blanket and asked Ratliff for instructions as to how to force down the glass of a large sedan. Considerably later, they again came back with a small roadster, apparently having been unable to steal the larger car.

Seemingly the bandits had taken a liking to the chubby youth they had kidnapped.

"We could kill you but we're letting you off light," one of them told him, and they all shook hands with Wylie in parting.

He proceeded to the police station and reported the affair to the authorities and no time was lost in getting on the trail of the robbers, who had headed north.

A few hours later, an officer standing beside a store in South Bend was attracted by the peculiar behavior of a small roadster containing three men. The car was running on a rim but apparently the driver caught sight of the deputy, for he backed the car at a rapid rate, then whirled around and dashed away in the direction from which they had come.

The officer summoned other officers who were nearby and they piled into two cars and gave chase.

For a mile the pursuit continued down the highway, the deputies in the first car firing and the bandits returning the fire. Then the outlaws' car swung into a narrow road leading to the oil fields and raced on for nearly a mile before it suddenly stopped. The trio sprang out.

"Cy" Bradford, one of the most celebrated officers of West Texas, was in the second car in the chase and when the machine slowed up he jumped out and ran diagonally in an effort to head off the robbers who were running a slanting course toward the shelter of woods.

Santa Claus is Captured

RAISING his double-barrelled shotgun, Bradford fired. Ratliff fell and did not arise. Bradford ran on and fired again. Helms, who had been unwounded until now, fell to his knees but arose and staggered on. The officer reloaded and fired once more, this time striking Hill.

But the two men reached the brush and plunged out of sight.

The fallen bandit—who was the Santa Claus—had five automatics, three cartridge belts and a shotgun—the greatest arsenal that a robber has ever been known to carry on his person in all the history of crime in the United States.

After "the Battle of South Bend," the greatest manhunt that West Texas has ever seen began. Airplanes were used. Bloodhounds were set on the trail. Texas Rangers, a dozen sheriffs and hundreds of citizens tracked both sides of the shallow and winding Brazos river which traverses a region of rugged grandeur, abounding in hills and canyons, with boulders, caves and thickets affording a million hiding places.

At one time, a member of the posse stood on top of a big rock under which Helms and Hill were crouched, but they were unseen.

They had become weak from loss of blood and from hunger. Under the cloak of night, they stole a few ears of corn from a farmer's barn—the first food they had had in days. They wandered around in a stupor. Helms had become delirious. Suddenly Hill realized that their aimless steps had taken them back to the very edge of South Bend. He guided his companion again into the region of mesquite and cactus, however, without their being seen.

Late that evening they made their way to the outskirts of Graham where Helms expected to find a friend. They spent the night in a barn. Early the next morning, the haggard men—eyes bloodshot, faces pale and drawn under a week's growth of beard, and clothes torn by brambles and rocks—were seen in the edge of Graham and residents notified the authorities.

Deputies Gentry Williamson and E. H. Little and City

Marshal J. W. Davis rushed to the scene in a car and, springing out, covered the bandits. Hill weakly turned and tried to run. Helms staggered back a pace and feebly moved a hand backward. And so ended the chase, exactly a week after the bank robbery.

A Terrific Toll

TWO officers dead, six citizens wounded, one bandit slain and the other three wounded and captured—such was the record of the Cisco holdup, the most sensational crime in Texas in the past twenty-five years.

Who were the men who had planned and committed this crime that surpassed in lurid details a Wild West novel or a ten-twenty-third melodrama?

Marshall Ratliff lived in Cisco. He had been convicted of bank robbery and had been given a long prison term, but after only a few months was freed by Governor "Ma" Ferguson.

Henry Helms who, from the side door of the bank, had wielded his automatic in desperate combat against the forces hemming in the bandits, likewise had done time in the Texas penitentiary and he, too, had been liberated by the woman governor.

Robert Hill was an ex-convict.

Davis, the slain bandit, had no criminal record.

The robbery was a product of a brilliant inspiration, beginning with the Santa Claus disguise which enabled Ratliff, undetected and unsuspected in his home town, to lead his confederates into the bank without suspicion, and with each detail worked out carefully—but it was all set at naught when a brave woman, heedless of menacing pistols, rushed from the bank and carried the tidings of the robbery to the police station.

Ratliff, though wounded four times, was the first to recover and only a few weeks after the crime, he was placed on trial in the courthouse at Eastland, the county seat of Eastland County, in which Cisco is located. It was the last trial held in the old temple of justice which, at the conclusion of the trial, was torn down to make way for a beautiful structure. Incidentally, it was in the cornerstone of this old building that "Old Rip," the horned frog, emerged alive, credited with a nap of thirty-one years. But as Kipling would say, "That's another story."

Although no one in the bank could identify Ratliff—because of the false face and Santa Claus garb—there was the identification of the little girl who saw his face for a moment in the fleeing car. There was the wound on his chin and the bullet hole in the chin of the Santa Claus mask. There was his presence with Helms and Hill—readily identified—when the Battle of South Bend was waged. And there was in his possession the automatic that had been taken from the bank.

He was tried for robbery with firearms—which can be punished by death in Texas. But the jury fixed the punishment at 99 years and Ratliff remarked to officers, "That's no hill for a high-stepper like me."

Later, however, he was tried for the murder of Chief Bedford and was doomed to the electric chair.

Helms was the next to be tried. Throughout the trial, he sat with bent head and eyes down at the floor except occasionally he peered upward, without moving his head, as a witness was on the stand or an attorney was stating an objection.

Once his expression changed. Ranger Captain Tom Hickman was on the stand to identify Helms' four pistols. A light of interest came into the bandit's eyes as he gazed at the weapons.

And once he suddenly turned in his chair and looked

directly behind him. Whether he was expecting to find a confederate there with aid or an officer off guard or what will never be known. Whatever he expected to see, he doubtless was disappointed as the man seated immediately behind him was this writer, jotting down notes on the trial.

On a peaceful Sabbath morning soon after church bells had chimed out their notes on the sunshiny air, the jury brought in a verdict of death. The iron composure of the man did not desert him. There were tears in the eyes of more than one juror but not a muscle flinched in the face of the four-gunman. He did not raise his head at the muffled sobs of his wife. After a moment, he lighted a cigarette. At the jail, however, he spent a sleepless night.

Hill, unlike his comrades, confessed to his part in the robbery and took the witness stand. He was only 21. Helms, oldest of the trio, was 31, with a wife and five children. Ratliff was about 26.

The most youthful bandit told the jury that he had been left an orphan and had been placed in the state juvenile training school though he had committed no crime. This was corroborated by officials of the institution. His story touched the jurors. Four pistols and two cartridge belts identified as his were discounted by his declaration that in the bank he had fired into the ceiling and then only to keep people from rushing in. When the attempted exchange of cars occurred, he fired at the pursuers—but only after they had fired at him, and he was wounded in the exchange of shots. When he was captured, he did not offer resistance but ran, expecting to be killed as there was a reward of \$5,000 offered by the state bankers at the time for dead bank robbers.

So the jury gave him 99 years. At a solemn scene, he was sentenced and promised his attorney, who had been appointed by the court and served without pay, that he would make a model prisoner. Church workers visited Hill at the county jail. He professed religion and desired to be baptized.

Hill Makes His Exit

BUT soon after being taken to the penitentiary, Hill escaped. He was captured after a few hours. Some time later, he was in another break, this time with the noted Bob Silver, and was free somewhat longer but was re-taken. Not long after that, he broke out again and, having been out for some weeks now, it seems likely that he will be extremely difficult to find if, indeed, the law ever lays hands on him again.

Helms' attorney carried the death verdict case to the highest court in the state but his doom was affirmed and a date for his execution was set.

But it was now contended in his behalf that, during his long imprisonment with the shadow of death over him, he had become insane, so a sanity hearing was asked. If ruled of unsound mind, he would escape the "chair."

His hair shaggy, his face hollow and his eyes staring into vacancy, he presented a far different appearance than in his former trial. While witnesses testified and lawyers argued, he kept up a low chant that wore upon the nerves of all who listened to the queer, drawling sing-song:

"Ain't—gonna—sing."

Over and over, countless times he chanted the weird refrain.

But the jury found he was sane.

In his cell in condemned row on the eve of execution, he ordered a meal. When the guards came at midnight to escort him through the little green door, he fought and struggled as he was carried to the "chair."

An Attempted Break

RATLIFF, too, had appealed his case and month after month went by with no decision from the high court.

Meanwhile the Santa Claus bandit had been given a portable phonograph and as murderers walked to their doom he played "When the Roll is Called up Yonder." The phonograph was silent, however, when Henry Helms went forth to die.

But Ratliff apparently lost his mind after his long imprisonment in condemned row. He, too, had a chant. "The Lord have mercy on my soul" was his utterance, over and over.

An attorney filed an application for a sanity hearing in his behalf. He was removed from the penitentiary to the county jail at Eastland.

There for ten days he lay on a cot, seemingly blind, paralyzed and demented. Every move that he made was aided by the officers. He seemed as helpless as a baby.

But one night—November 18, 1929—when Jailer Pack Bilborn and Deputy Sheriff Tom Jones were locking up the cells in the main part of the jail which was separated by a partition from Ratliff's cell, he arose, slipped down the stairs to the office and obtained Jones' pistol. The keys to the front door of the jail were not there so he started back upstairs to obtain the keys at any cost.

At the top of the steps, he met Jones and the desperate outlaw opened fire, wounding the officer three times. Kilborn rushed in and, as Ratliff fired twice, the jailer grappled with him and they rolled downstairs locked in each other's arms.

Kilborn wrested the pistol from Ratliff but when he pulled the trigger, it was empty so he used the weapon to club Ratliff into submission. Kilborn's daughter rushed in from the family living quarters adjoining the jail with a pistol to save her father, but he restrained her from shooting.

Sheriff Foster and other officers were summoned and Ratliff, relapsed into his role of helplessness, was carried back to his cell. In the struggle with Jailer Kilborn, the prisoner had succeeded in obtaining the keys, which were found up his sleeve.

A crowd gathered about the jail but it was reported that Officer Jones would recover and the crowd dispersed.

But the next day it was learned that the officer could not recover. "Uncle Tom," as the deputy was affectionately known was a pioneer and was highly esteemed as a quiet, unassuming man of friendly nature and of jovial character, with a smiling greeting for everyone. All day, the

attack of which the gray-haired, unarmed man had been the victim was the absorbing topic in Eastland and throughout the county.

The Mob Acts!

LATE that evening, a crowd began to gather around the jail. More than a thousand persons assembled. Kilborn pleaded with the men to let the law take its course.

Suddenly a commanding voice rang out: "Bring him over here" and hands were laid upon the jailer, who was brought to the spot designated and was relieved of his keys.

"We've waited long enough" was the shout—referring to the fact that it lacked but a month of being two years since the Cisco robbery was committed.

A group of men entered the jail. Kilborn broke loose from those holding him, rushed into the jail and forced the men out. But a larger group immediately entered, brushed him aside and went to Ratliff's cell.

He was brought down, nude, into the chill, wintry air. A block away stood a tall telephone pole and from it ran a guy wire to another pole.

Someone produced a rope and, after Ratliff's hands had been tied, the noose was placed around his neck. Then the other end of the rope was flung over the wire and was seized by a number of hands. He was raised into the air but the rope broke and he fell to the ground, murmuring "God have mercy and forgive me."

A tow sack was wrapped about him and another rope was brought forward. The mob started to raise him again when someone said: "Maybe he wants to talk."

"Let me down and I will talk," the doomed man said.

He spoke low and indistinctly, the words, "Boys, forgive me," being heard, and then he was raised high in the air and his lifeless body dangled there for half an hour.

It was the first lynching of a white man in Texas for many years.

The next morning came one of the most pathetic scenes in all this drama of blood and tragedy.

"Uncle Tom" Jones was dying. No hope was held out for him. He was conscious, however, and his friends were permitted to enter the hospital room and bid the faithful officer a last farewell. One by one, they came in. When Jailer Kilborn entered, the dying man said:

"I've stayed with you to the end, Pack, but now I've got to leave."

His last words were of fatherly admonition to his young son, "Be a good boy."

And so died the last victim of the Santa Claus bank robbery.

NEXT MONTH

Don't miss reading this amazing story

The Mystery of the Mink Coat

By W. C. I. HALLOWELL

In which a brilliant detective outwits a famous crook

In Startling Detective Adventures for

APRIL

On Sale at all newsstands March 10th

The Menace of Bogus Checks

The losses of the fastest-growing racket in the country
estimated at above \$200,000,000 annually.

DESPITE numerous institutions, both public and private, that specialize in protecting the public against the passers of worthless checks, surety companies class check frauds as the fastest-growing criminal racket in the country.

The annual losses are estimated at above \$200,000,000, with an increase of twenty per cent annually. Experts explain this by the fact that the various States are making stiffer laws for protection against the criminals who use guns, and smart crooks are turning to paper frauds.

Sure-thing crooks have learned that they may pass any number of worthless checks without laying themselves liable to prosecution for anything more serious than a misdemeanor so long as they hold down the amount of each check to ten dollars. Another thing that makes it a soft racket compared to gun-play crimes is that the bad-check passer is not subject to extradition from one state to another unless the amount of a check exceeds one hundred dollars. He may pass a bundle of bum checks for, say, ninety dollars, without risk of extradition.

The possible immense profits and the comparative safety of bad-check passing bid fair to place it in the ranks of big business. Right now it is conducted on a highly organized basis, according to bankers' protective societies. Not too scrupulous printers are engaged to counterfeit the checks of big corporations with large payrolls. An operator known as the "scratcher" forges the name of the paymaster to the check. The "layer" sells the checks to the "passer" at so much per check and the last works them off on credulous merchants.

The increased popularity of travelers' checks, arising from the American craze for touring, has opened a fruitful field for the bad-check workers. Cleverly engraved imitations, with imposing serial numbers and signatures, of the familiar checks of the American Bankers' Association, Pullman Car Company, American Express Company and Cook's, have been widely cashed for several years past, despite repeated warnings of constantly recurring frauds.

Fake tourist agencies have been framed up to help the graft along. The Canadian Pacific Tourist Association exists only in the presence of its name boldly engraved across the face of a traveler's check. Police and bankers, for many months, have been trying to induce merchants and hotel-keepers to grab and hold for arrest any person who offers one of these checks for cashing. It has netted more than half a million dollars to the crooks.

The Canadian Pacific Railroad Company has no such organization, and none of the following concerns exist except in the minds of the check racketeers: The American Travelers' Association, Oriental Tourist Association, United Bankers' Association. Their checks all look good, but they are all bad.

Filling station operators are probably the worst sufferers from these checks. What more natural than that a man in a travel-stained car should heave to for a tank of gas and tender a traveler's check? And especially when there are a woman and child in the back seat? The gas man has cashed many good traveler's checks and he has come to regard them as about all alike and all good, treating them as so much currency. Which is just what makes the racket good.

What carries more assurance than a certified check? All the more temptation, therefore, for crooks to counterfeit certifications. Buffalo police report the following case:

A Mr. Johnson opened an account at a Buffalo bank. An accomplice, using the name of Le Moyne, opened accounts in five other banks. To establish confidence, good checks were drawn against each account over a considerable period. Johnson then issued a certified check to Le Moyne for two thousand seven hundred dollars, almost his entire balance. Five exact copies of this certified check were faked up, each bearing the forged signature of the issuing bank official. One of these was deposited in each of Le Moyne's five banks. Le Moyne then drew from each bank two thousand one hundred dollars. He was paid without question since he had deposited certified checks bearing signatures with which the bank officials were familiar. They thus had ten thousand five hundred dollars clear on the transaction which they had gotten from the five banks, when Johnson identified Le Moyne at the first bank so he could draw the money on the first check.

In another instance a similar racket was worked on ten banks, and the forged signatures were so cleverly executed that when the exposure came, it was impossible to tell what check bore the genuine signature.

New York hotels have been defrauded so often by bad checks that they simply will not cash personal checks offered by guests whom they do not know. A mere suggestion to that effect by a guest is received by a landlord just as enthusiastically as if the guest's hand had been caught in the cash register. Instances are reported in which a hotel manager has permitted a guest to return home with his promise to forward the amount of his bill on his arrival, rather than accept his check. Before these precautions became the rule, any big New York hotel could have papered its walls and ceilings throughout with its bad checks.

A fairly safe rule is to cash no check unless you know the holder or unless he is identified by a person you know.

That is not ironclad. Good men sometimes go wrong. A man may give ninety-nine good checks and his hundredth prove a "stinger." In the last analysis there appears to be but one protection for the carefree and obliging soul who endears himself by cashing every check that comes to him just as if it were the greatest pleasure of his life and that is unfailing good luck.

The Baby Cab



These children in the Valenti neighborhood drew Josephine's wrath by the mere fact that they were alive.

THE Los Angeles fire department responded to an alarm sounded in that section of the city known as "Little Italy," at 11:00 A. M., July 8, 1929. The address given was in the very heart of the Italian quarter, where gang wars, bootlegging, hi-jacking, bombings, and murder are commonplaces.

The first fire truck, with screaming siren, came to a stop in front of a frame house at 669 Moulton Avenue. Several frightened-looking men who had gathered on the sidewalk stared stupidly at the fire apparatus.

"Where's the fire?" the battalion chief demanded.

A man, who afterwards gave his name as John Giros, pointed to a thin spiral of smoke in the rear of the premises.

"Back there. But no need to bring the hose now," he added in a curiously dull voice. "You're too late. . . ."

He led the firemen down a driveway and stood, as though stupefied by the horror of what he had seen, in front of a narrow areaway between a garage and a two-room frame house.

At first glance the firemen saw only the charred remnants of a baby carriage. Then approaching nearer, their horror-stricken eyes were riveted to a tiny form which lay within the carriage . . . it was the nude body of a baby boy, burned to death!

The battalion chief hurriedly bent over the pitiful spectacle.

"Whose baby is this?" he demanded, straightening up.

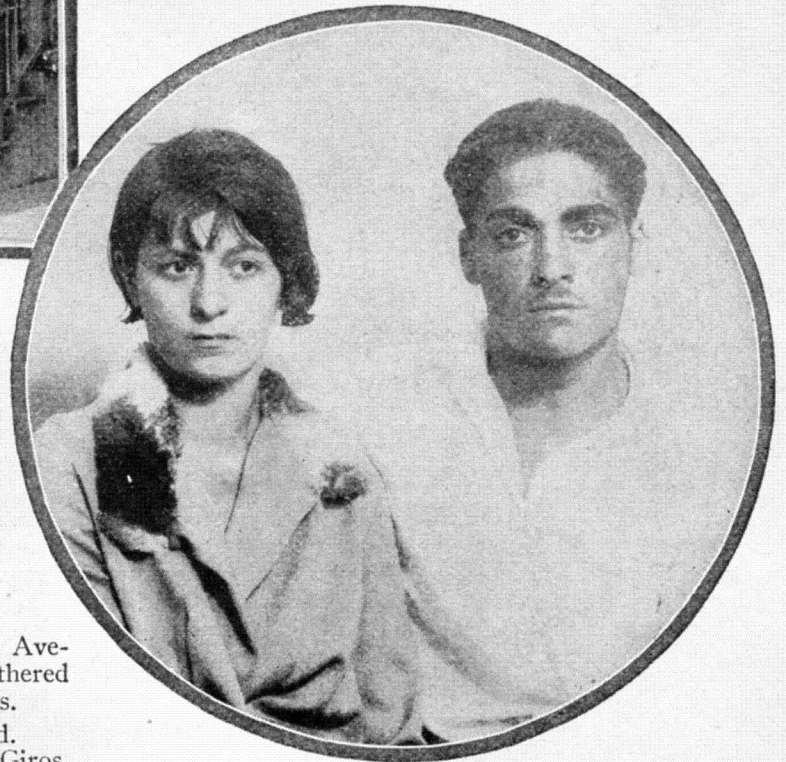
A slender, white-faced girl came slowly forward from a nearby group of spectators.

"Mine!" The word came in a hoarse whisper.

"Yours!" The fireman turned toward her, astonished.

For this girl was hardly more than a child herself. She was a typical Italian beauty, with clear olive skin, midnight hair and large, melting dark eyes.

How jealous Josephine Valenti, child wife, made a death pyre of her tiny son's carriage, then coolly confessed, makes this crime one of the most unusual in the records of the Los Angeles Police Department.



Josephine Valenti and her husband, Sabatino, a few hours after she mercilessly took her baby's life by setting fire to his blankets.

"How did this happen?" the officer asked.

For a moment the girl stared blankly—as though her stunned senses failed to grasp the meaning of the question. Then, with an obvious effort, she repeated the words.

"How did it happen? . . . I don't know." A perceptible tremor shook her slender body. "I put Dominick to sleep there in the shade, and go to sit on my mother-in-law's front porch. Pretty soon, somebody yell, 'Fire!' I run to look . . . and find him—like that . . ." she moved slowly in the direction of the burned baby-carriage and stood before it, one hand held over her mouth—then: "Oh, God!" she wailed, "how could anyone do that to you, Dominick . . ." and sank to the ground, sobbing wildly.

The fire chief lifted her gently and supported her while she slowly regained control over her emotions.

"Try not to break down," he urged softly. "We need your help in this—this case. You haven't told us your name yet . . ."

Murder Case

By *Detective Lieut. F. B. Condaffer*

of the Los Angeles Police Department
as told to Madeline Kelley

"My name? Josephine Valenti," she said dully.
"Do you know of anyone who might have had a grudge against you . . . who would do this thing?"

With a sudden emotion, the girl jerked her arm free and turned fiercely on the silent group of neighbors standing behind her.

Child Mother Accuses Neighbors

"WHO set fire to my baby!" she screamed hysterically.
"Some of you kids have been playing with matches!" At her shrill accusation, several small children drew nearer their mothers' skirts.

"Now, now," the fire chief protested, "you mustn't accuse anyone of such a thing. No child would deliberately do a thing like this."

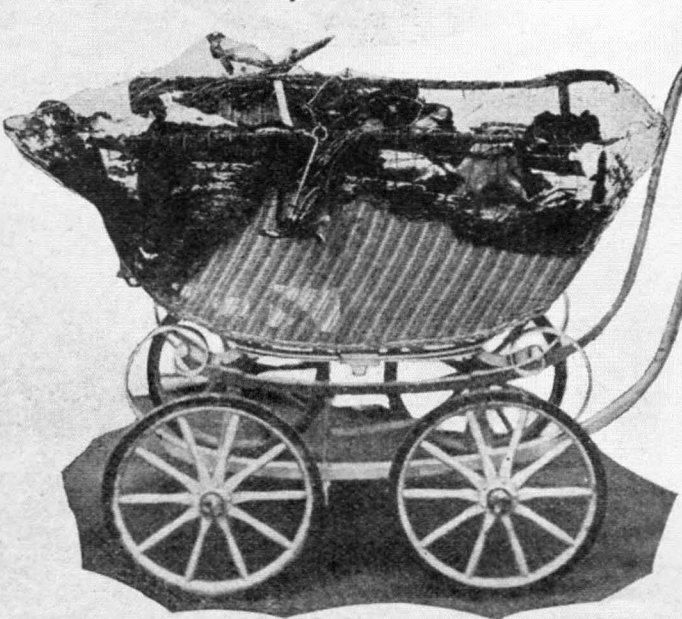
"How do you know?" the girl demanded. "These kids are always up to something!"

The fireman turned to his men.

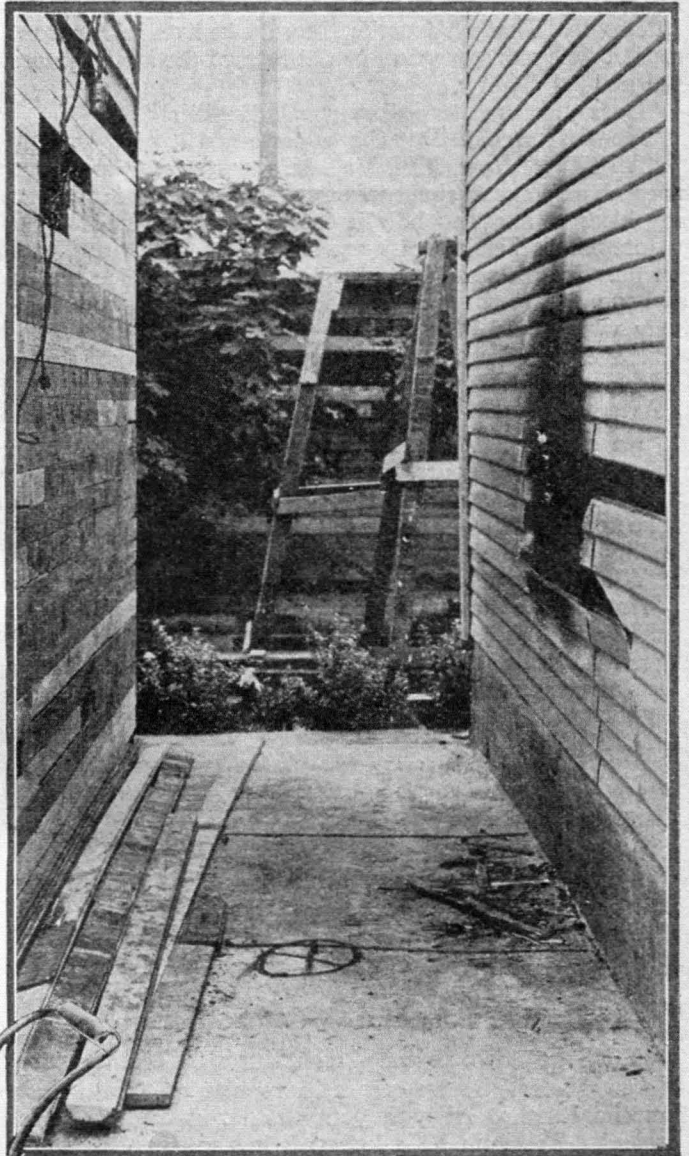
"Phone for an ambulance and some investigators from headquarters," he ordered. And then, to the women who has assembled in the yard: "Some of you take care of this girl."

In the meanwhile, a small stream of water had been turned on the building near which the baby-carriage had stood. A few boards of Josephine Valenti's house had ignited from the same fire that cost the life of little Dominick.

Shortly afterward, Investigators Everett Harris and J. C. Montgomery of the Arson Squad, confronted the mother of the dead baby.



Remains of the wicker cab in which little Dominick Valenti met death at the hands of his mother.



View of alleyway in which the murder took place. The baby's cab stood between the parallel lines on the pavement, and the fatal match was struck where the circled cross is seen. At right is the dwelling to which the fire spread.

"What is your name?" Harris began, getting out pencil and notebook.

"Josephine Valenti."

"How old are you?"

"Nineteen. Have I got to answer all those questions over again?" she inquired wearily. "Two policemen have just been here. Look . . ." She handed Harris the cards of Detective Lieutenants H. S. Kuykendall and A. W. Eaton, of the Lincoln Heights Police Station. "They've just been here."

"I'm sorry, Mrs. Valenti, but we're from the Fire Department and we'd like to ask you a few

questions of our own. What is your husband's name?"

"Sam. His real name's Sabatino, but everybody calls him Sam. He's working. We've sent for him."

"Do you live here with your husband?"

"Yes. And her—" indicating a middle-aged woman who sat on the opposite side of the plainly furnished little room. "That's his mother, Rosa. She lives in the front house." The older woman glanced toward the investigators and nodded slightly.

"Does your mother-in-law speak English?"

"No—not much. But she understands it pretty well."

"All right. Now, Mrs. Valenti, we want you to tell us as much as you can about this terrible accident. Have you any ideas at all as to how it could have happened?"

Josephine's big brown eyes, swimming with tears, met her questioner's steadily. "No," she said in a voice barren of hope. "I've thought and thought. I don't know anybody who would have . . ."

"Have you or your husband any enemies that you know of?" Harris interrupted.

After a moment's deliberation, the girl answered.

"No enemies. At least, none that would do this horrible thing. Of course, we—Sam and me—we've had arguments with some of the neighbors, but nothing to make anyone want—want to kill . . ." she broke off, tears swelling from the great dark eyes.

"When do you expect your husband home?"

"Any minute, now. But he won't know nothing. How could he? Nobody saw it. You know—I've been thinking . . . there's a little girl lives a few doors from here. She's always hanging around, and the other day I told her to go home. She sassed me and I slapped her. Maybe . . ."

"Did she like the baby?" Harris asked.

"She acted like she did . . . but I don't know. She didn't like me."

"Who is this girl?"

"Well, I don't like to say her name unless I know she did it. It would be a terrible thing to accuse her of. Wait till Sam comes, so we can talk to him and see what he says."

Decide Bambino Was Murdered

"LET'S go down to the Arson Bureau," Montgomery suggested, "so we can get a regular report on this. You can leave word with your mother-in-law for your husband. Tell him he'll find you in the fire station at Second and Hill."

Josephine obediently turned to the other woman, spoke a few words in rapid Italian, and went to get her hat and coat.

At the offices of the Arson Bureau, the young mother was taken into the presence of Captain Earl Haguewood and there subjected to a four-hour grilling.

Meanwhile, Josephine's young husband, Sam, had arrived. He expressed the greatest grief over his baby's cruel death and joined the fire investigators' questioning of his wife.

Hour after hour, punctuated with spasmodic intervals of weeping, Josephine Valenti reiterated that the cause of the fire was as much a mystery to her as to her interrogators.

At 4:00 P. M., Captain Haguewood announced that he was satisfied the fire had been of incendiary origin, and forthwith telephoned to Captain E. Raymond Cato, commanding the Homicide Squad at Central Police Headquarters and requested that an officer be sent to investigate the murder of little Dominick Valenti!

Captain Cato ordered me to report at the Arson Bureau of the Fire Department immediately.

Arrived there, I was informed by Fire Investigators Harris and Montgomery that suspicion pointed strongly to Mrs. Josephine Valenti as the murderer of her own baby, incredible as it might seem.

A few minutes' conversation with the suspect convinced me that any admissions from her would have to be obtained by resorting to some other method than those already employed.

Up to this time I had had no opportunity to form any opinion of my own as to the woman's guilt or innocence. However, it was apparent from the facts that had been brought out that she was the one person who could, if she would, throw any light on the mystery. Accordingly, I suggested to Captain Haguewood that a change of surroundings might better our chances of winning from Josephine Valenti any information she might be withholding, and asked permission to take her into my custody for the time being.

It was with relief that the Captain turned her over to me.

"If you can get anything out of her, you're going some," was his comment. "I'm worn out trying. She threatened to jump out of this second-story window if I talked to her any more."

I then invited Investigators Harris and Montgomery, together with the suspect and her husband, to accompany me on a little automobile ride.

"Where we going?" Josephine demanded when we reached the police-car.

"Not far. Get in."

Ten minutes later, we drew up in front of the Hall of Justice at Temple and Hill Streets. Not a word was spoken as we alighted from the car and entered the wide portals of the building that has known so much of tragedy.

I led the way down a marble staircase to the basement floor.

A moment later we stood in the reception room of the County Morgue!

When Josephine Valenti realized her surroundings she turned to her husband and seized his arm convulsively.

"I don't want to go in there," she whispered, while the color drained from her face.

But the grief-stricken man shook her off impatiently. "I do," he declared, in a broken voice. "I want to see my baby!"

"You can, in a few minutes," I interposed firmly. "But just now, Josephine and I will go in alone and see Dominick."

Confesses on Viewing Body

TO THE reader, this may seem a heartless procedure.

However, it must be remembered that an innocent child had apparently been murdered, and that drastic measures are often necessary in solving murder mysteries. My theory was that if Josephine Valenti had killed her baby, the sight of his incinerated body would compel some involuntary expression of guilt or remorse from her. On the other hand, if she were innocent and displayed the natural reactions of a mother under these harrowing circumstances, it would go far, in my opinion at least, toward dispelling the cloud of suspicion that now enshrouded her.

Moreover, it was entirely possible that Josephine Valenti, though innocent herself, knew who had murdered her baby but feared to reveal that knowledge! Italians have their own way of wreaking vengeance upon each other, and it is seldom that the services of the police de-

partment are requested or desired in connection with any crime committed by one of that race—even the crime of murder! A retaliatory knife-thrust in the back from an unknown assailant is to them a more satisfactory way of evening the score.

A moment later, an attendant directed us to the sheet-covered slab upon which rested the body of little Dominick Valenti. I drew the white covering and took Josephine's hand in mine to steady her as we gazed down upon the charred remains of what had once been a chubby-faced, dimpled baby boy.

After a brief moment, the woman's breath escaped her in a deep, long-drawn-out sigh.

"Oh—h—h . . . my baby . . ." were her only words, uttered in a plaintive wail. I thought for a moment she would collapse in my arms. However, she straightened up almost at once and immediately resumed the strange composure that had been hers throughout the investigation to date.

"Now, Josephine," I began, gently replacing the sheet over the tiny form, "it hurts a girl like you to tell a lie, doesn't it? You've been worrying yourself sick over this." I paused and looked squarely into her eyes. "Don't you want to tell me the truth and get this terrible secret off your mind?"

For a brief instant she returned my gaze steadily. Then, she averted her eyes. Her low, sweet voice was the only sound in that chamber of death as she said slowly:

"Yes . . . I will tell you . . . I—I did it!"

Silently, I led her into a small ante-room adjoining, and indicated a chair.

"Sit down," I bade her. "I want to hear all about this. Why did you do it?"

"It was Sam's fault," she said abruptly. "If he'd done right, it wouldn't have happened!"

"What do you mean?"

Jealous of First-Born

"HE WASN'T good to me. Wouldn't give me any money for the baby's milk. Today, I owed the milkman four dollars, and I was ashamed to face him," she stormed.

"But, Josephine!" I exclaimed, appalled, in spite of my experience in unearthing apparently trivial motives for the most dreadful crimes, "you surely wouldn't kill your baby just for that! You could have borrowed money from someone—"

"Oh, it wasn't only that! Sam and me were always quarreling. Sometimes he hit me! He loved Dominick . . ." Flames of cruel malice flared and died in her black eyes . . . "And I knew it would hurt him if I burned the baby up!"

For a few moments I was speechless, as I heard this girl-mother thus confess that she had made a hapless innocent pay with its life for the "crimes" of its father.

Finally, I said:

"But you—you didn't love your baby at all, then?"

"Oh, I liked him all right," came the impatient answer, "but he was in the way all the time. We didn't have enough money for him."

Further questioning revealed that she had met Sam in December, 1927, while he was visiting relatives who lived next door to her father's house in Binghamton, New York.

"That's when I began to like him," Josephine said. "And the next February, we run away and come to Los Angeles to live with his father and mother."

"You got married in Binghamton—"

"No, we didn't get married. We just run away."

"But you're married now?"

"Yes." The girl was apathetic again, after her brief outburst of anger and resentment. "That's one of the things we fought about. He promised to marry me when we left the East. Then, when we got out here, he wouldn't do it. When I found out I was going to have a baby, I told him if he didn't marry me I'd leave him as soon as the baby was born . . . but he wouldn't pay no attention. Sometimes he'd slap me and his mother would have to come between us to keep him from hitting me before Dominick was born!" The girl's voice, even and low-pitched, was now droning on and on in an emotionless recital of the drab events that transpired following her romantic elopement from her home with the handsome, fiery young Italian, Sabatino Valenti.

"Then, last April, when Dominick was five months old, I packed my things and said I was going to leave. It was then that Sam said he'd marry me. So we got married and went to live in the little house back of his mother's place.

"Sam wouldn't let me go to work to make some money, and he wouldn't let me give the baby away or put it in a home, or anything, so this morning when I was giving Dominick his bath, I made up my mind I'd do something!" She stopped suddenly, her black eyes alight with hard determination.

"Go on," I prompted. "What did you do next?"

"Well, I thought at first I'd choke him." There was no feeling in the voice making this dreadful statement. "Then, I decided I didn't want to watch him die, so I finished washing him and then took him to my mother-in-law and told her to dress him while I heated his milk."

"I thought you said you didn't have any milk for the baby," I reminded her.

"Oh, I had a little bit. I got some money and bought some—"

"Where did you get the money?"

"I told Sam before he went to work this morning that we owed the milkman four dollars, and he said there was some money in his other pants—" Abruptly, Josephine Valenti's jaws snapped together and she stopped short in her recital. Evidently, she had only then realized that this part of her narrative conflicted with what she had first given as an excuse for burning her baby to death.

"Never mind about that," I urged, anxious that she finish her story. "Just tell what you did after you heated the baby's milk."

"I went to my mother-in-law's house, got Dominick, carried him out to his buggy and gave him his bottle. I put the buggy between the house and the garage where it's shady, and left him there to go to sleep." She paused, as though expecting me to prompt her with another query.

"Then what?"

Unfeeling and Remorseless

"IN A FEW minutes, I went back to see if he was asleep. He was. So then I went back to my mother-in-law, and pretty soon she told me to go and look at Dominick again to see if he was all right. That was when I went into the kitchen of my house and got a match. When I came out, I went over to where the baby was, struck the match on the cement walk and dropped it into his buggy!" The horrible admission, so at variance with her placid expression, was made with no trace of emotion.

"Did you go away then?" I asked.

"No. I stood there and watched it until I saw it catch fire to the covers over him. I guess I stood there about a minute—" the limpid eyes did not waver, "and then I

went back and sat down with Rosa on the porch again. She asked me if Dominick was asleep and I said yes. About ten minutes later, I heard Mr. Giros next door holler 'Fire!' And that's all."

"You knew, of course, what was burning?"

"Sure, I knew what it was, all right."

Although inwardly aghast at this astounding confession, I dared not let the girl suspect my true feelings. In as calm a voice as I could muster, I asked:

"Have you ever been confined in an institution?"

"What do you mean . . . a reform school?"

"No. An institution for the feeble-minded."

She stared at me in angry amazement. "Say, I'm not dumb! I finished the seventh grade in grammar school."

"Then you knew what you were doing when you set fire to your baby? You knew you were committing murder?"

"Sure, I knew," she shrugged. "Lot's of people commit murder."

In all my experience, I had never contacted a less remorseful or more utterly unfeeling criminal than Josephine Valenti. And, from my observation of her, I could only agree with her own statement that she was *not* mentally deficient, difficult though it was to reconcile her unnatural act of hideous cruelty toward her own child, with that of a normal woman.

"Well, that's all for now," I said, rising. "We'll go over to the police station and you'll be asked to repeat what you've just told me, for the official records of the case."

"I'm tired of talking," was her reply. "Will they put me in jail?" she asked suddenly, as though by afterthought.

"Yes, they'll have to do that, of course."

"I don't care," she muttered. "I don't care what they do with me."

When we joined the others, Sam Valenti was permitted to view his son's body, after which we all got into the police car and headed for Central Station.

In the offices of the Detective Bureau, the word quickly spread that the mother of the cremated baby had made a confession, and Josephine Valenti was at once the center of attention, the cynosure of all eyes.

Newspaper reporters and photographers swarmed around her and she obligingly posed for several flashlight pictures.

Later, when Josephine Valenti had re-dictated her confession to Police Stenographer F. Sullivan in the presence of Captain Cato and myself, it was decided to take her to her home where she agreed to re-enact the crime committed that morning.

A policewoman, summoned to take charge of the prisoner, accompanied the investigating party to 669½ Moulton Avenue and there, with the southern California twilight lending the plain little "bungalow court" buildings a semblance of beauty, Josephine Valenti retraced her steps of the morning and described in detail her every action leading up to and including the tossing of a lighted match onto her baby's bed coverings.

"Here's were I scratched the match, see?" She pointed to the cement walk beneath us, where the scar made by a scratched match was plainly visible.

"I'll just mark this," I said. With a charred stick I drew a large cross inside a circle to mark the spot.

Child Witness to Crime

WE WERE on the point of leaving when a small girl who had been standing on the porch of an adjacent house, called out triumphantly:

"I saw Josephine strike the match this morning!"

Josephine whirled on her with the ferocity of a young tigress.

"You shut-your mouth!" she screamed. "This is none of your business."

"I saw Josephine light the match," the child repeated in a sing-song voice, from her safe refuge.

Whereupon, I addressed the little girl.

"What's your name?" I asked.

"Esther Garcia. She—" pointing to Josephine, "lit the match right there by the garage and threw the box away. I picked it up and here it is." She proffered me a small box of matches.

I realized that as soon as the confessed murderess had conferred with an attorney, she would likely repudiate her signed confession and this child would prove an important witness for the state at the murder trial.

"Are you telling the truth?" I demanded sternly.

"Yes, sir," Esther answered earnestly. "But I didn't see her throw it in Dominick's buggy, because mama called me just then and made me go to the store. When I come back, the fire wagon was here and Dominick was dead. That's when I went and picked up the match box . . . but mama wouldn't let me tell it this morning."

"How old are you, Esther?"

"Ten, goin' on 'levin."

"Well, you run on in the house now, and don't forget what you've just told me. We may want you to tell it again some day. Promise?"

"I promise. I won't forget, 'cause I saw her do it!"

Josephine's black eyes followed Esther's departing figure with a look of hatred.

Upon our return to Central Headquarters, Josephine Valenti was formally booked on a charge of murder, escorted by a policewoman to the county jail and lodged in a felon's cell.

At the preliminary hearing, July 11, Josephine repudiated her confession by advice of counsel, and pleaded not guilty by reason of insanity. She was held to the Superior Court for trial, August 28.

The defendant's own confession, made on the day of her arrest, was introduced as evidence against the accused. This, together with little Esther Garcia's statement, and testimony by Rosa Valenti, given through an Italian interpreter, to the effect that her daughter-in-law had bitterly resented the baby's advent into the world and had treated it cruelly since the day of its birth, resulted in a jury of five women and seven men finding Josephine Valenti guilty of first degree murder, with a recommendation of life imprisonment fixed as the penalty.

During the following week, the convicted murderess stood trial again, this time to determine whether she was mentally responsible for her crime.

Defense alienists expressed the opinion that the girl was insane and a low-grade moron. The state's alienist declared he believed Josephine Valenti to be sane, and stated that her reactions to his examination were those of a normal person.

This conflicting testimony resulted in a deadlock in the jury-room for forty-eight hours before a decision was reached—a decision that adjudged Josephine Valenti sane and ended her hope of evading a life term behind prison walls.

A strange aftermath to this case occurred on November 8, 1929—less than two months after Josephine had entrained for San Quentin penitentiary. Her mother-in-law, Rosa Valenti, and an eleven-year-old brother-in-law, Pedro Valenti, died suddenly of a mysterious malady. Thus has a vengeful Fate directed the destinies of several members of the Valenti family!

Scotland Yard a Dogged Sleuth

IMAGINATIVE writers have made much of Scotland Yard in fiction. But they need take only fact if they would reveal interesting work by detectives who solve baffling crimes, for these English detectives have an uncanny habit of working on puzzling cases until a solution is reached. Sometimes years pass, but Scotland Yard never forgets.

There is a case, for instance, that occurred some twenty-five years ago. A woman, Camille Holland, left her home, Moat House, for London. Friends in the city reported she had not been seen. Police investigated, but learned nothing.

Four years later a man was arrested in London for attempting to pass a forged check. His name was Herbert Samuel Dougal, and he lived at Moat House. It was he, police found, who ostensibly had driven the Holland woman to the station. Where was she now? Had she merely disappeared of her own accord? Had she met foul play on the way? Or had Dougal himself done away with her?

In the meantime, Dougal was held on the charge of forgery. Detectives from Scotland Yard went to Moat House.

They could find no trace of human remains. So they determined to drain the moats. This was accomplished, but laborers and detectives found the search in the muddy moat-bottoms a fruitless task. It seemed hopeless.

But all along, the detectives in charge had subordinates working in the neighborhood, talking with residents, and jotting down every bit of conversation about Moat House or Dougal. Casually enough, it was disclosed that Dougal had had a ditch on the farm filled in a few years back.

Now the task was to find some laborer who knew the location of the ditch. It would be almost an endless job to dig up the whole farm.

More inquiries. Who had worked on the farm? Finally the man was found. Surely, he knew where the ditch was—he'd helped fill it in. Then detectives set to work. Soon a woman's shoe was uncovered. Then a body. The head, doctors said, contained a bullet wound.

So Dougal was tried and convicted of murder.

In other instances, however, quicker work is necessary to apprehend a criminal. Years cannot be allowed to lapse. Take the case of the Slough murder. Detectives were called to a home in London where the badly battered body of an elderly woman was found. Evidently, she had struggled for her life.

Inquiries were made among the neighbors. Yes, the victim had been in the habit of carrying a sum of money on her person. She'd always done so. It was common knowledge.

THEN, detectives assumed, it wouldn't be amiss to place robbery as the motive. Now, who had lived in the neighborhood and left not long since? It seemed obvious that the murderer had learned of the woman's custom of carrying money, then had moved to another neighborhood, and, operating from there, sought to get the cash.

In reply to questions, residents described such a person—a man. Quick work was necessary, for he'd be attempting a getaway. From meager descriptions obtained, policemen were widely notified and Yard men were sent into the streets—searching for the needle in that vast haystack.

Now, the only clue about the premises was a small sheet of paper, ostensibly used to wrap something in, something that was round and cylindrical. Edges of coins were impressed on the paper, twenty-one of them. Two were fainter than the others—perhaps smaller coins!

Almost immediately a suspect was arrested. He had a scratch on his face. How did he get it? Oh, in a fight! But drug stores were visited by the detectives. Yes, various clerks had been approached by such a man who wanted to obtain medicine that would heal the scratch. At each place he had given a different version of how the scratch was inflicted.

That was evidence enough. The man was trying to hide something. Evidently, he had been scratched in the struggle with the woman. So the detectives went to the man's room. There they found twenty pounds in gold—nineteen sovereigns and two half-sovereigns. The twenty-one coins fitted the bit of paper found at the scene of the murder.

So another man was tried for murder, convicted, and executed.

Here is a startling and gruesome example of detective work at Scotland Yard.

An entrance to a London home was barred by a huge gate, with a row of sharp spikes on top designed to prevent anyone from climbing over. But one morning, when a caretaker was about to open the gate, he found a strange thing hanging from one of the spikes. It proved to be a human finger, with a ring attached. Scotland Yard was notified immediately.

The detectives reconstructed the case this way: A man had attempted to climb the gate. In jumping over, his finger ring caught in the spike and the force of his fall completely severed the digit.

Hospitals were questioned. Yes, a man with his finger missing had asked treatment, but refused to stay. In the meantime, the fingerprint was taken and compared with others in Scotland Yard. It tallied with that of a well-known burglar, and soon his description was broadcast through the city.

In short order the man was captured, tried, and convicted for attempted burglary.

How I Solved the

Forgery, embezzlement and murder figure in this sensational case which Detective John P. Hoy of Minneapolis declares is one of the most difficult he has been called upon to solve in more than forty years of sleuthing.

MANY difficult criminal skeins have been given me to unravel during my more than forty years experience as a detective but none of them has ever presented more difficulties in the matter of capturing the criminal and keeping him captured than the case of the celebrated "bluebeard" who stood the whole Northwest on its head a number of years ago. He suddenly showed up in Minnesota out of nowhere, his past as mysterious as his appearance. And that past together with a considerable future was to send me scurrying far and wide in an effort to send him to the gallows and keep me thus engaged for more than a year.

The curtain goes up on this drama at the F. C. Laird Lumber Company's logging camp near Pine City, Minn., into which a bedraggled stranger, blue from cold, stumbled at 8:30 in the morning and begged for an opportunity to work for his breakfast.

Frank Laird, a son of F. C. Laird, who was in charge of the camp, ordered the cook to prepare the requested meal and then questioned the newcomer as to where he hailed from and why he chanced to be out in the wilds without an overcoat or overshoes.

While he wolfed a breakfast large enough for three men, the stranger told his story.

"My name," he said, with an Oxford accent, "is Myron R. Kent and my home is in London, England. I have been in the states for some time, hoping to find some enterprise in which I might engage with financial success without calling upon my people for any more assistance.

"As you may imagine, I have not met with any luck. And the worst blow fell last night when the house at which I was boarding near Pine City burned to the ground. I escaped with only such clothes as I have on. I was fortunate indeed to save my life."

It was evident at the outset that Myron R. Kent was a man of breeding and intelligence. Mr. Laird had no reason to doubt his story and took pity upon him. Kent asked if he might not stay



"I didn't kill her, I tell you!" Squedunski shrieked. "And I didn't get this money from Mr. Kent!"

Kent Murder Mystery

By Detective JOHN P. HOY

The Northwest's Best Known Sleuth



"Then where did you get it?" I growled at him. "Tell me, and be sure to tell me the truth!"

at the camp and work for his board and Laird told him he might remain until he "got on his feet."

The stranger was put to work on the books and in charge of the storehouse. He was a whizz as a bookkeeper, adding up three columns of figures simultaneously and doing the work with such surprising speed and accuracy that Laird was convinced he had made a find.

Kent, instead of working for his board, was paid a good salary and when spring came, he was brought to Minneapolis to the headquarters of the company. His work speedily impressed F. C. Laird, Frank's father who

was the head of the firm, and before long he was put in complete charge of the accounting department.

Kent had not been in Minneapolis long until Julia, beautiful and accomplished daughter of F. C. Laird, chanced in at the office of the lumber company in the Kasota building and was introduced to him. Suave and brilliant in conversation, the accountant made a deep impression upon the young woman. He discovered that she was interested in music.

"You know," he explained, "my music has been terribly neglected for a long time. But sometime I would like an opportunity to play for you a few of the old English airs of which I am so fond."

Julia, who had heard something of Kent's distinguished family back in England, was thrilled with the idea of hearing him play and becoming better acquainted with him.

"Perhaps," she smiled, "my father will invite you to our home sometime."

The following Sunday I chanced to drop in at the Laird's, who had been my friends and neighbors for years, and was introduced to Myron R. Kent.

It was the first time I had ever seen him although Frank Laird had, by way of gossip, told me the story of the stranger's sudden appearance at the Pine City camp and his quick rise in the regard of the family.

"Mr. Kent, I want to present Mr. Hoy, one of our old friends," Mr. Laird said. The stranger stepped forward, beaming. As our hands clasped, Mr. Laird continued:

"Mr. Hoy is inspector of detectives and has had some very interesting experiences with all classes of criminals."

Like every other detective I instinctively studied strangers the first time I met them. And for just the fraction of a second I noted that the smile disappeared from Kent's face and his hand twitched momentarily when the words "inspector of detectives" fell from Mr. Laird's lips. But he was quickly himself, smiling and suave.

"I am delighted to meet you, inspector," he said, "you know I have often thought I missed my calling for the apprehension and punishment of criminals has always had a fascination for me."

He held my hand until I abruptly drew it from his, spouting volubly about his admiration for Scotland Yard.



John P. Hoy, for a score of years head of the Minneapolis detective agency which bears his name, has solved some of the most baffling crimes this country has known, among them the notorious Price mystery and the Hayward case, which was a feature of the January *Startling Detective Adventures*. For many years he was a member of the police detective force of his home city.

There seemed so much of the four-flusher about him that I could not resist the temptation to show him up.

"By the way," I asked, "who is the chief inspector of Scotland Yard?"

"Frank Prost," he shot back at me. "Did you ever meet him?"

"No," I lied, "I never did. What kind of a chap is he?"

And to my surprise, Kent described my old friend most accurately.

"I have met the inspector," he said, "but only casually and of course he would not remember me."

Suspicious Are Aroused

H E HAD met the inspector, indeed, as I was afterwards to learn. But, as you have guessed, it was not many months until Julia Laird became Mrs. Myron R. Kent.

For some time, the couple lived happily. A son was born to them and Kent became more and more important as a factor in his father-in-law's business. Eventually, however, he took to gambling and neglected his young wife. And at last Frank Laird came to me and asked me what I thought of his brother-in-law.

"Well, he's rather peculiar," I answered evasively. "Somehow I never can feel that I really know him very well."

"Perhaps the less we know, the better," was the significant reply, "but I'm going to check up on him."

He did check up. Two weeks later, to the amazement of the elder Laird, it was discovered that Kent was \$20,000 short in his accounts.

When his guilt was pointed out to him, Kent wept copiously and begged for an opportunity to redeem himself for the sake of his wife and his little son.

After a long family conference, it was decided that Kent would not be prosecuted but he would not be permitted to remain with the company. His theft would not be made known to anyone outside the family and another position would be found for him in the hope that he would redeem himself.

The elder Laird went to his friend Isaac Staples, a lumberman at Stillwater.

"Kent is a fine bookkeeper but he has been unable to get along with my sons," he urged, "and I would be glad if you could give him a position."

Staples was anxious to oblige his old friend. Kent plunged into his new work with great enthusiasm and made a decided hit with his new employer.

At the end of six weeks he stepped into the president's office and exclaimed:

"Mr. Staples, money is being wasted in the accounting department. If you will pay me \$50 a month more, you can discharge three clerks and I will see that the work is all done properly."

The suggestion was carried out and matters seemed to be going quite satisfactorily. Then at the expiration of three months, Kent suggested that two more clerks should be dispensed with.

\$30,000 Missing

M R. STAPLES became suspicious. He had never before encountered an employee who insisted upon doing the additional work of five others. He put an auditor to work on the books. Sure enough, in less than six months, Kent had gotten away with \$30,000 of his employer's money.

Another family conference. There was talk of prosecution but eventually Mr. Laird agreed to pay up the shortage provided Kent would leave the country and would never again communicate with his wife and child.

Mrs. Kent was brokenhearted over the conduct of her husband. But the Lairds were the most devoted family I ever knew and in an effort to help her throw off her grief, Frank Laird took Mrs. Kent and her son Earl with him to the camp at Pine City and paid her handsomely to act as bookkeeper for the firm. For a time everything went well. Then one day the express agent at Pine City called Frank aside and said:

"I hate to tell you this, Mr. Laird, for I promised Julia I'd never give her away. But every month she comes down here and sends her entire salary to her husband."

"Where is he?" Laird asked indignantly.

"In Mandan, North Dakota."

Without another word, Laird turned on his heel and sought his sister, reproving her gently but firmly for having any communication with the man who had caused so much trouble for the family.

That night Mrs. Kent disappeared. Investigation revealed that she and her son had gone to Mandan and joined the embezzler.

During the few months he had been at Mandan, Kent had established a wide acquaintance and was doing fairly well in the insurance business.

He was an enthusiast over large life insurance and soon after his wife joined him he insured her life for \$40,000

explaining that he wanted to set a good example for prospective clients.

Mrs. Kent wrote to her relatives in glowing terms about Myron's reformation and they were beginning to hope that at last their troubles with the blacksheep son-in-law were at an end.

Mrs. Kent's happiness was not to last long, however. Her husband received a letter stating that his mother had died and had left him out of her will because he had failed to visit her.

There followed another letter from London stating that his father was becoming old and childish and threatened to disinherit him if he did not return. There was no other way out of it. He must go to England.

He made the rounds of his friends telling about the necessity for his trip abroad.

Mrs. Kent had not been asked to accompany him. Instead she and her son, Earl, then four years old, were to remain at their home just outside Mandan, with Thomas Squedunski, a Pole whom Kent had hired to do the gardening and other work around the little place.

Mrs. Kent Is Killed

SHORTLY after midnight of the day following Kent's departure, Squedunski, leading the hysterical child with him, thundered at the door of a neighbor's house and told an incoherent story about burglars trying to break into the Kent home and how, during the excitement, he had accidentally discharged a shotgun and killed Mrs. Kent.

Officers were called. The Pole was locked up pending an investigation.

Mrs. Kent's body was found as he had described, sprawled across the floor of her bedroom. A shotgun charge, fired at pointblank range, had struck her behind the right ear and had almost decapitated her. There was no evidence that burglars had attempted to break in the window, as Squedunski and little Earl, had said. Neither was there any trace of footprints in the turf below the window. Save for a very meager description of the two marauders, there was nothing for the police to proceed upon.

Squedunski was detained in jail and Mrs. Kent's family was wired that she had been accidentally shot, while every possible suspect in both Mandan and Bismarck was rounded up in a search for the would-be robbers.

Frank Laird arrived at Mandan just as the coroner's jury was completing the hearing. The Pole had told his story in such a straightforward and honest manner that he had won the sympathy of everyone.

The jury was about to begin its deliberation when Mr. Laird, whose presence was unknown to them, stepped forward and requested that the case be continued for thirty days.

The county attorney and the sheriff were both reluctant to have a delay granted and were for releasing the prisoner, against whom no charge had been lodged, without more adieu. Laird however, was a convincing talker and his request was granted.

For a few days, Mr. Laird stayed about Mandan trying to obtain such evidence as he could.

I had heard nothing of the killing except brief accounts in Chicago papers. When I arrived at the depot in Minneapolis, Frank Laird was there to meet me. Quickly he told the story of his sister's death and of his suspicions.

Already he and Captain John Martin had gone to Mayor Eustis and obtained permission to have me detailed on the case exclusively.

We left as soon as possible for Mandan arriving there on the morning of the thirtieth day of the continuance. A still further continuance until 2:30 in the afternoon was granted and I went with Sheriff George Bingenheimer to the scene of the murder.

"George," I said to the sheriff, "this poor woman was murdered without a doubt. Are we going to let those responsible for the crime get away with it?"

"I feel the same way about it," was the reply.

"Very well then," I said, "let's get a warrant and find the evidence later. If that Pollock gets away once, Kent is safe."

"What do you mean?" Bingenheimer questioned, "you can never make anyone in Mandan believe Kent had anything to do with this."

"That will come out later," I said, "in the meantime run a little bluff. I'll have a murder warrant for you to serve on this fellow in a few minutes and I want to be with you when you do it."

I hunted up Frank Laird and explained my plan. He readily agreed to sign a complaint charging Squedunski with the murder.

Grilling the Prisoner

THE prisoner turned ghastly pale when we served the warrant with extraordinary formality but he protested his innocence volubly for hours.

We took him to the scene of the killing and asked him to enact the tragedy.

According to his story, both he and Mrs. Kent had their backs to the window at which they had seen the burglars, when the gun was accidentally discharged.



Frank M. Nye, now district judge of Hennepin county, Minnesota, was county attorney at the time of Kent's trial and prosecuted the case vigorously. Later he served in Congress.

For twenty-four hours we gave him the third degree stuff as stiff as anyone ever got it. But the Pole had been made confident of escape by the friendly attitude of the townspeople and he fought like a beast at bay.

"A pretty tough bird, this Pollock," I said to myself, "if Kent hired him to kill the woman, he must have known this man pretty well."

Then the thought came to me: Had Kent paid him money in advance? Squedunski had only a little change in his possession when he was arrested. He never had more than a few dollars at one time. If blood money had been passed, where was it?

"Well," I said at last, "Sheriff, we've made a mistake I guess. Squedunski tells us a straight story."

I extended my hand to the manacled one of the prisoner.

"Tom," I said, "I'm sorry we had to keep you awake so long and to go after you a little rough. If I had known as much then as I do now, I'd never have had you arrested for murder."

Bingenheimer looked at me with keen surprise.

"You know Tom, if it hadn't been for the expense I've been put to coming up here, I'd feel like throwing up this job right now."

There was a lull of a few moments. The prisoner was beginning to take on a hopeful look.

"Mr. Hoy," he finally faltered, "I've got a little money. I think I ought to pay your expenses since it was my fault you men came up here."

It was the answer I had hoped for.

"Where do you keep your money?" I asked. He led us to a hollow tree about a half mile from the Kent home and thrusting in his hand came out with a roll of bills totaling over \$250.

I had been talking to him in the most friendly tone during the jaunt to the hiding place. But as he counted out his money, I turned on him fiercely:

"Is that all that scoundrel gave you to cold-bloodedly murder his poor wife?" I demanded.

His jaw fell and his hand trembled until the manacles rattled.

"I didn't kill her, I tell you," he almost shrieked, "and I didn't get the money from Mr. Kent."

"Then where did you get it?" I growled. "Tell me and be sure to tell the truth."

"I had it for a long time, five or six years," he whimpered.

"Then why are most of these bills less than two years old," I thundered.

As a matter of fact while the bills looked fairly new I had not read the dates, but I knew Squedunski was lying.

"I don't know Mr. Hoy," he whined, "maybe I'm mistaken."

"The Little Red Book"

"**M**AYBE you're mistaken about there not being more money in there, too." I thrust my hand into the tree trunk. There was no more money but I drew forth a little red note book.

That was the end of the chapter as far as Tom Squedunski was concerned.

"It's no use, now, it's no use," he wailed and sank down on the ground. "I murdered her. I will tell you everything. Take me back to jail."

It was evident that the little red notebook had been the straw that broke the camel's back. I glanced through it but it meant nothing to me for there was much scribbling in Polish. Before we called in a stenographer for his written confession, I got hold of a Pole and had him read

the contents of the magic book. To my surprise, it contained explicit directions as to what Squedunski should do.

He should take the gun during the day and go out as if for a rabbit hunt. Upon returning home in the evening he should neglect to draw the shells from it, as had always been the custom, and place it in the corner. That night he was to induce Earl to sleep with him, then shortly after midnight awaken the child and tell him burglars were trying to get into the place.

Tom was to point out to the boy that there was a strange face peering in at the window and his childish imagination would make him think he had seen prowlers. Then when the child ran to his mother, Squedunski was to grab the gun and shoot Mrs. Kent as if by accident. Then he was to take Earl to the neighbors and have him sufficiently coached to bear out the accidental shooting story.

Squedunski of course told the whole story. He had been promised \$2,000 to kill Mrs. Kent and \$250 had been paid in advance. In order that there would be no chance of his failing to carry out instructions, Kent had had him write down explicit directions as to his course. Following his arrest, which had been foreseen, Squedunski had been promised financial and legal aid by Kent but he had also been warned that he would be killed if by chance he should injure the boy when he killed Mrs. Kent.

Immediately upon the signing of the confession we swore out a warrant for the arrest of Kent on the charge of murder, offered \$1,000 reward for any information that might lead to his apprehension and sent out 50,000 circulars containing his description and picture.

Weeks passed without any trace of Kent. Then a watch we had established on the mail of one of his particular friends in Duluth revealed the fugitive's presence in Lincoln, Nebraska. I immediately got on the phone and asked for his arrest, fearing he would fly the coop before I could reach the Nebraska town. He was picked up by detectives there and turned over to the county authorities to await extradition on the charge of murder. But smooth and plausible to an unbelievable degree, he persuaded the sheriff that he was a very much wronged man and so worked upon the official's sympathy that he took the prisoner to his home for dinner. During the progress of the meal Kent stepped from the table to fill a water pitcher, at least according to the sheriff's story, and bolted to safety.

Four more months passed without an inkling of Kent's whereabouts. We seemed to be at the end of our rope. But, I figured, there was a possibility that Squedunski was holding something back.

I secured the service of a well known Minneapolis Pole and took him to Mandan to question Squedunski. Sure enough he finally worked himself into Tom's confidence so strongly that he secured a hot tip.

There was an insurance man in a northern Minnesota town, who by the way has since turned out to be a well known and respected citizen and whom we will designate as George Jones, with whom Squedunski was to communicate only in the case of greatest emergency. Jones would at all times know Kent's whereabouts.

A letter was fixed up for Squedunski to sign showing that my Polander friend was his attorney and we went to Jones' home town.

The Pole had been carefully coached and when he interviewed Jones in his office, the latter was not at all suspicious.

"You know," the Pole said, "it is very vital to this case that I get in touch with Kent. Do you have any idea where he could be reached?"

"Yes," was the reply, "I had a letter from him this week. But he has forbidden me to tell anyone where he is." As he made this statement, Jones' eyes fell unconsciously on the drawer of his desk.

"I can't tell you where he is. But maybe I can get your message to him. It's now lunch time. Let's go over to the hotel and have a bite and we'll talk matters over while we're eating."

When they reached the hotel, my friend excused himself a moment and rushed up to my room where I was waiting.

"I'm sure the letter's in the left hand drawer of his desk," he said.

"Good," I replied. "I'll get it while you are at lunch. He'll take it with him when he leaves the office this afternoon."

The Fugitive Is Located

IT was a rainy, miserable day. The insurance office was on the ground floor. I piled up a couple of packing boxes and attempted to get in the window. But I guess I was never cut out for a burglar. I slipped and almost broke my leg as I tumbled from the boxes.

Some townsmen saw me and I know they must have notified the sheriff. Sore physically and mentally, I tore into the building and broke down the office door.

Sure enough, there was a letter there, unmistakably in Kent's writing, and signed "George Harvey."

It explained that Kent had parted with \$600 to make good his escape from Lincoln and he was working as a section hand near Canon City, Colorado, the scene of the recent bloody prison mutiny.

Thrusting the letter back in the drawer and repairing the damaged door as much as possible, I hurried back to the hotel.

An hour later, I was on a train speeding westward.

It was 2:30 a. m. when I arrived at the bunkhouse of the section gang. The cook was the only man stirring. I gave him \$20 which got me on friendly terms immediately.

"You have a man here named Harvey," I said. "I'm very anxious to see him and I'll give you \$20 more after I have my conference. Where is he?"

The cook showed me to the door of a small room separated from adjoining rooms by a flimsy partition.

"He sleeps by himself," the cook said, "and he doesn't have much to say to the rest of the fellows. Guess he's got a little bit of the bighead."

I could hear snores from behind the door. Excusing the cook, I hesitated for a moment whether to break in the door immediately. I was dead tired and the leg I had injured in the fall from the drygoods box was still paining me. I could not get a train out of the camp for hours. The room adjoining "Harvey's" was unoccupied. I threw myself down on the cot resolving to rest for awhile but not to go to sleep. It was fortunate that I did not. Within an hour, I heard a stir in the adjoining room. I stepped out and threw my shoulder against the door which caved in like cardboard.

I was in the nick of time. Kent was just raising the window preparatory to jumping out when I threw my flashlight and my gun in his face simultaneously.

"Just a minute, Mr. Kent," I said, "your old friend Hoy, of Minneapolis, wants a word with you."

"I thought so," he replied, "I dreamed you were coming here and I thought it was time to move on."

When I got him into the light, I could hardly believe this ill kept, stooped and bearded man was the tall, dark, hand-

some chap with a sheik-like moustache I had known back in Minneapolis.

When I got back to Mandan with my prisoner, I got another fine insight into the fickleness of popular opinion. The news of Kent's homecoming had spread like wildfire and all of Mandan and most of Bismarck it seemed was at the train when we pulled in.

But instead of feeling glad that an obvious cold-blooded murderer was captured, when the crowd saw the haggard tramp-like individual, there were expressions of sympathy everywhere.

Overnight the same people who had been most sympathetic for Squedunski, now placed all the blame for the killing on him.

Battling for Life

MONEY in abundance poured in for Kent's defense. It came from a mysterious source which we were not able to trace. Men high in politics interceded for him and it was evident that a bitter battle would be put up to save the prisoner.

County Attorney Foss asked for a special prosecutor and the Lairds agreed to pay the bill. His choice fell on two men who were afterwards to loom high in the nation's affairs—either Pierce Butler, then county attorney at St. Paul, and now a Justice of the U. S. supreme court, or Frank M. Nye, then county attorney at Minneapolis, later congressman and district judge of Hennepin county, Minnesota. Butler was engaged in a big case and Nye was secured.

He presided with the greatest brilliance he ever displayed in any of the numerous murder trials in which he was prosecutor. His closing address was a masterpiece and from 9 o'clock in the morning until 5:30 in the afternoon with the exception of a half hour for lunch, he held the jury spellbound, as he pleaded for a hanging verdict.

But, brilliant as he was, he little outshone the prisoner, who surprised court and jury by making the argument in his own defense, citing points of law with surprising knowledge, protesting his innocence and his love for his wife and painting a lurid picture of the dreadfulness of executing a prisoner on circumstantial evidence.

The jury at that time fixed the penalty. It came in after several hours of deliberation, with the hang-verdict Nye had asked.

But the case was by no means ended. The supreme court ordered a retrial on a writ of error and a change of venue was taken to Fargo. In the meantime, I had sent Kent's picture and description to Chief Inspector Prost of Scotland Yard, along with several of Kent's letters from his supposed parents. Back came the reply:

"Sure we know Myron R. Kent. He was the leader of a gang of forgers that gave us trouble here for two years. We finally rounded him up and he served five years in prison. He claimed to be an American. We think he is but his history is vague." Along with his letter, Inspector Prost sent some old papers and photographs that had been taken from Kent during his arrest. One of these pictures was to come in handy later.

At the second trial, we showed up Kent's record. He could not deny it. But he still insisted he came from a fine English family. The second trial was as full of pyrotechnics as the first. But it too, ended in a hanging verdict.

Still money was available to save Kent's life and the fight continued. Petitions poured in on the governor. Governor-elect Frank Briggs who had not yet taken office

came to court wildly indignant because he had been informed in an anonymous letter that there would be "\$10,000 in it" if he would commute the sentence after he was sworn in.

"I'll let him hang if it's the last thing I ever do," Mr. Briggs, who had known the Lairds well when he formerly lived at Buffalo, Minn., announced.

However the date for Kent's execution was set before Briggs took office. The scaffold was built. Kent had made his farewell statement to the press in which he had bitterly protested his innocence and closed by saying:

"I want inscribed on my tombstone, these words—'Myron R. Kent, innocent man, hanged by John Hoy and Frank Nye, imported hirelings from Minnesota.'"

A Last Minute Commutation

JUST as the death march started, however, a commutation of sentence to life imprisonment was received.

Still public sentiment was strong for Kent. A petition for pardon was prepared and circulated. One of the most active in Kent's behalf was Judd LaMoore, then the supreme boss of North Dakota politics. Unless something was done at once, Kent would be sprung was the word I got from Bismark.

It looked desperate from the standpoint of the prosecution and I was at loss how to proceed.

Then, in desperation, I again went through the papers and photographs I had received from my friend, Inspector Prost. If I could dig up another dark chapter in Kent's past, maybe I could block the clamor for his release.

There was but one chance—and a long one. A photograph of a distinguished looking man with a beard bore the name of a Detroit photographer. I went to Detroit immediately and to my joy found that the man was then city physician of Detroit, and an uncle of the prisoner.

"We don't want Frank freed," he said, "we are content to let him spend the rest of his life in prison." Then he gave me a tip which sent me to a little Ohio town, which, in order to protect a fine family, I shall not name. I returned to Bismarck just as the pardon board was completing a hearing on Kent's plea for pardon.

I requested to be heard and here is the story I told the board:

"Gentlemen, if you pardon this man, you will be committing a very grave offense against justice. But if you do, he will not obtain freedom. He may even go to the gibbet. For I shall immediately request his arrest as a fugitive from justice.

"You know something of his history—but there is still much to know. You remember at his trial, he spoke with great brilliancy and with rare knowledge of law. He had had the proper training to do so.

"Almost twenty years ago if you had inquired anywhere in that section of Ohio, what young man had the best prospects in life, the answer I am sure, would have been—'William W. Pancoast.'"

As I mentioned this name Kent became as pale as death.

"He was 22 years old," I continued, "he had only recently graduated from law school and he was married to a college sweetheart known for her beauty and social prominence.

"He had worked up a good law practice and so brilliantly had he conducted himself in court, that the reform element, anxious for a change in prosecuting attorneys, induced him to run for the office. He was swept into office by a large plurality. He opened a vigorous campaign against evil-doers and received wide applause from the better element. He and Mrs. Pancoast were active in

public affairs and were pointed out as an ideal married couple because of their evident devotion to each other.

"At this time, the owners of a large lumber company had a misunderstanding with the town's only bank and resolved to start one of their own. It must, they agreed, be one that would financially and every other way overshadow the bank with which they had had difference.

"In order to do this, a popular man must be chosen for president. Someone suggested the most popular man in town for the position. And it was offered to Prosecuting Attorney William W. Pancoast. He accepted on the understanding that the new position must not conflict with his duties as prosecutor.

A Sudden Death

THE bank was organized and within a few weeks was doing a large business. Then Mrs. Pancoast died suddenly.

"The reform prosecutor and banker was inconsolable. The whole town grieved with him. Two days after the funeral, a terrible scandal broke in the community. A brother of Mrs. Pancoast who had been absent in the east, returned home and demanded that the body of the dead woman be exhumed and an autopsy held. The judge called in Mr. Pancoast who had not yet returned to either his legal or banking duties.

"By all means," he said, "if my brother-in-law desires it, have the body exhumed."

"The order was issued, the vital organs of the dead woman were removed and sent to Columbus to be examined for traces of poison.

"The next morning, Pancoast failed to arrive at the bank as he had promised to do. Neither did he appear at his law office.

"The cashier of the bank opened the vault. All the currency, a total of \$50,000, was missing.

"Evidently someone who knew the combination had robbed the bank. But everyone knew it could not be Pancoast. Perhaps it was suggested, he had gone to Columbus, to be present at the chemist's examination. That night a telephone call, informed Pancoast's friends that he had not arrived at Columbus but the viscera of Mrs. Pancoast had been examined and contained enough arsenic to kill twenty people."

By this time the situation had become very tense.

"Now gentlemen," I continued, pointing at Kent who was now like a death's head, "this prisoner, this wretch who is seeking your mercy is not only guilty of robbing his father-in-law of \$20,000, of embezzling \$30,000 from Mr. Staples, of forgery committed in England and of having his wife assassinated in Mandan. He is William W. Pancoast, bank robber and wife poisoner.

"I have the evidence in my possession to prove it. His people have suffered much. They were willing to go to any extremes to prevent him from being hanged. But they don't want him freed."

"That's a lie, another dirty lie, Johnny Hoy," the pseudo "Kent" exclaimed shaking his fist at me.

I drew from my pocket a college picture of Pancoast. He had changed of course, but the likeness was undeniable.

William W. Pancoast, alias Myron R. Kent, alias Harvey went back to the penitentiary where he died, eventually, without ever again requesting a pardon.

Squedunski, his accomplice, pleaded guilty and was sent up for life. He undoubtedly would have been pardoned shortly but he, too, died a short time after his commitment.

The Clutching Shadow

By WILSON COLLISON

Author of *Up in Mabel's Room*

It looked like suicide, but a slender clue enabled Detective Jimmie Brenlin to solve this mysterious Newton case and bring two arch conspirators to justice.

JIMMIE BRENLIN, of the Newton detective bureau, shook his head and smiled in a perplexed manner. He glanced up at Hiller and saw the grim-faced inspector eyeing him gravely. Brenlin understood in a dim way that Hiller expected him immediately to advance some theory or completely to abandon the argument he had set forth five minutes after looking at the body of the dark-faced man huddled in the big chair before a fireplace the grate of which contained nothing but dead ashes.

"Why do you think this man was murdered?" asked Hiller, tersely.

Brenlin made a motion of protest with one hand and rubbed his chin for a moment in reflective silence.

"Maybe it's just a hunch," he answered, with a faint smile.

"We don't play hunches in this department, Jimmie," Hiller remarked acidly. "Time's too valuable. You were the first one here, I guess."

"The first one on the job after his butler called," Brenlin returned seriously.

"What'd you see?"

"Just what we're looking at now." Brenlin shrugged a little and glanced again at the man huddled in the chair.

"The gun was in his hand—the way he's holding it now?" Hiller questioned.

"Exactly. I haven't moved it a fraction of an inch."

"That note he scribbled was there, too?"

"Yes."

"Then everything points to a plain case of suicide," Hiller said shortly. "I've gone over the room minutely. The windows are all locked. You said the door was locked—"

"Yes. I broke it in with the aid of the butler."

"Well, then, how can a man be murdered in a locked room—in a lonely old house like this?" Hiller smiled half contemptuously. "The gun's in his hand—powder burns on his head—one bullet has been fired right into his brain—his hand fell to the table in precisely the way you see it now. Isn't that plain enough to you?"

"No, sir," Brenlin returned stubbornly; "it is not."

Hiller shot him a swift look, half questioning, half disdainful. Then he took out his watch and glanced at it.

"I've got to get back to town, Jimmie," Hiller said. "Do you want to do anything before I send the medical examiner out?"

"I'd like to look into the case a little further," Brenlin replied soberly. "I may find something. If you can give me an hour on the job—"



"Come in, Jarvis!"
Brenlin shoved his gun
into the pit of the butler's stomach and fairly hurled
him into the room.

Hiller laughed. He turned on his heel and strode across to the broad French windows and swept back the heavy draperies with a single movement of his big hand. He stood for a moment gazing out into the rain-swept blackness of the night.

"I'll leave you on the job—give you an hour before I send Parkins out." Hiller swung about and faced Brenlin. "If there's any suspicion in your mind—if you get anything definite—give me a ring before midnight. I want the case closed quickly. I've gathered some of the details of Carter's life from his butler. He lived here alone with the one servant. Damned creepy old house, I say." Hiller turned up the collar of his raincoat and pulled his

soft gray hat down firmly upon his head. Then he lighted a cigar and looked thoughtfully at the body of the man in the chair. A deep and ghastly silence seemed to settle over the room. Outside the wind moaned; the rain spattered against the windows, driven in the face of the swirling gusts of air.

Hiller appeared to be studying the situation in speculative silence; and while he was watching the body in the chair, Jimmie Brenlin was looking, with suddenly startled eyes, at the faint shadow of a hand, dimly outlined in the gloom on the wall in the far corner of the room.

The hand moved slowly; paused as if suspended for a single instant on some thin, invisible wire—and disappeared.

Brenlin caught his breath sharply. He looked at Hiller. The big inspector was moving toward the door that opened into the outer hall. He swung about as he reached for the door-knob.

"You ambitious young fellows," he said with a smile, "ought to be commended; but when you've been in the service as long as I have, your only idea will be to close them up as soon as possible. You're a good boy, though, Jimmie—one of the best in the homicide squad." He passed through the door into the heavy, blanketed darkness beyond.

Jimmie Brenlin heard the door close. He smiled grimly. His eyes instinctively sought that mysterious shadow on the wall again—but it was not there. With a single bound he reached the windows and held the draperies back. He saw the dull flash of the headlights on Hiller's car; heard the humming of the motor as it passed along the driveway. Then that appalling silence settled over everything again.

Prying Eyes?

HE WALKED across to the fireplace and got down upon his knees; but all the time he was warily watching and listening. He had the strange, almost haunting feeling that mysterious, prying eyes were watching him from some shadowed corner of the room. He could not shake off the feeling; it persisted and even grew. It did not accord with his general plan to be watched.

He ran his hand in among the soft, gray ashes, and brushed them aside. He knew the simple little clue was buried there, because he had seen it but a moment before Hiller had entered the room.

With a short intake of his breath, he found it. He pulled it out and blew his breath upon it to dust off the light coating of ashes. He shoved it into his pocket without looking at it, screening it in the palm of his hand so that it might not be seen by those eyes he now knew beyond the shadow of any doubt were watching him.

He walked back to the side of the dead man and peered into his face. It was a dark, sullenly handsome face. The man was fully clothed in evening wear. The table was littered with liquor bottles and empty glasses. In a tray there were five or six half-burned cigarettes. Brenlin took one of them up casually and examined it. He smiled and tossed it back. He was not wrong. His first theory was now positively proved. Carter had not been alone in the room at the time of his death.

He heard the sudden, sharp click of a door-latch behind him. He whirled about sharply, and touched the butt of his automatic in his raincoat pocket. From out of the shadows he heard the low, suave voice of the butler.

"Is there anything I can do, sir?" the man asked solemnly as he stepped into the circle of light streaming out from under the shade of the lamp upon the table at his back.

Brenlin made no reply for a moment. He studied the thin, ashen face of the servant with cool, speculative eyes. He knew that the man had a deeply rooted strategic position—one from which it would be exceedingly difficult to pry him loose.

"Sit down a minute," Brenlin said curtly. "I want to ask you some questions."

"But, sir, I've told you all I know," the butler protested, with a slight motion of one hand.

"All right," Brenlin retorted, "but I want to talk to you. Come here—" He stepped back, caught hold of a chair and drew it back a short way from the table.

The man crossed the room with the deliberate, soft-footed tread of a cat. He paused beside the chair and peered closely into Brenlin's face.

Brenlin, looking into the man's dark eyes, was conscious of a queer chill creeping up and down his spine. Those eyes were weird, cold, piercing pin-points of fire that seemed to burn right through him.

"Sit here," he commanded, and touched the chair with one hand, while he kept the fingers of the other hand upon the gun in his pocket.

"Very good, sir," the butler agreed gravely; and dropped into the chair with a faint smile mirrored upon his gray face.

"You told me your name was Jarvis, didn't you?" Brenlin inquired casually. He lounged back against the edge of the table and lighted a cigarette.

"That is correct, sir," the man answered in a monotone.

Brenlin watched him closely. He was abruptly conscious of a certain tension that had sprung up between them. Obviously, the man was cautious, on the defensive, for some intangible reason.

"How long have you been here with Mr. Carter?" Brenlin asked, taking a puff at his cigarette.

"Five years, sir."

"Who was in this house—in this room with him before you heard the sound of the shot?" Brenlin leaned forward and looked into the man's face sharply.

"There was no one in the house, no one in the room, sir," Jarvis replied imperturbably, with a slight shrug of his narrow shoulders.

A Difficult Witness

DON'T lie to me!" Brenlin reached out and gripped the other by the arm with vise-like fingers.

"I'm not lying to you, sir," Jarvis glanced up into Brenlin's face. "Mr. Carter had been home all day. There were no callers. Mr. Carter was in the habit of locking himself in the study after dinner, sir. He did so tonight. When I heard the sound of the shot—I think it must have been about nine o'clock—"

"How do you know it was about nine o'clock?" Brenlin rasped. "After you heard the shot, did you stop to look at your watch?"

Jarvis merely shrugged his shoulders and made a little gesture with one hand.

"But a moment before I heard the report of the pistol, sir," he remarked gravely, "I heard the clock chime in the hall."

"You've got a hell of a fine memory for details!" Brenlin said with a laugh.

"I have that, sir."

Brenlin felt momentarily undecided. He moved away from the table and took a turn about the room, all the while watching the butler warily. The man did not stir in the chair; he sat like some wax image, with his hands folded in his lap, his dark eyes staring straight ahead of him.

Brenlin tried to call to his mind some simple and swifter expedient to delve into the man's mind, to loosen his tongue; but he knew the man was far too shrewd to be tricked. He strode back to the table and took the small, automatic pistol from the hand of the dead man and examined it speculatively.

"Did Mr. Carter always keep a revolver on his desk?" he asked in a low tone.

"Invariably, sir."

"Why? Was he afraid of something—someone?"

"Not that I know of, sir."

"Did he keep large sums of money in the house—valuables or securities of any sort?"

"No, sir." Jarvis glanced up quickly; there was something apologetic and defiant in that glance. Brenlin catalogued it swiftly in his mind.

"This gun," Brenlin said, "is of German make." He spoke quietly enough, but there was a certain emphasis in his voice. "It's not a common firearm by any means."

"As to that, I can not say, sir."

Brenlin tossed the gun back upon the table. He walked over to a large chair near the fireplace and sat down upon the arm of it; he took out his cigarette case in an abstracted manner.

"I guess it's a case of suicide, all right," he said. "I'll have to wait here, though, until the medical examiner gets out. Will you have a cigarette, Jarvis?" He rose and moved toward the man with a smile.

"Thank you, no, sir," Jarvis returned. "I do not smoke."

The Butler Proves an Enigma

"ALL right." Brenlin slipped one of the tubes between his lips and lighted it.

"Has Mr. Carter any relatives?" Brenlin inquired, walking back toward the table.

"Only a distant cousin, sir," Jarvis answered. He straightened in the chair, turned his head a little, and looked directly at Brenlin. "A young Mr. Lanier, who lives in New York. I have already telephoned him, sir."

"You have, eh?" Brenlin leaned against the edge of the table again, smoking in a seemingly imperturbable manner; but all the time his head was working; a confused medley of thoughts were darting through his brain. He felt instinctively that this was going to be simply a case of working backward from the climax. There were few connecting links to carry him along. The murder—and he knew positively that it was murder—had been so neatly and skillfully planned and carried out that few tangible clues had been left behind. Whoever had used the gun had worn rubber gloves; there was not a single finger-print on anything in the room. Jimmie Brenlin, though, had never had a great deal of faith in the finger-print system. He reveled in deduction, the methodical building up of motives, the eliminations and additions of small, seemingly insignificant, factors in crime.

"I am expecting Mr. Lanier out within half an hour, sir." Jarvis rose from the chair and stood facing Brenlin, his face clearly outlined in the glow from the lamp.

Brenlin was not sure, but he had the feeling that there was a sardonic note of humor in the man's low, suave tones.

"Was he on friendly terms with Mr. Carter?" Brenlin asked.

"Oh, quite, sir." Jarvis smiled. "Mr. Carter was very fond of his cousin, sir. He frequently drove out here to visit with him."

"I see." Brenlin yawned. "You don't seem to be greatly upset over Mr. Carter's unexpected death."

"In a way, I am greatly shocked, sir; but I have looked

for it for some time, sir. He was a man to brood, to worry, sir."

"What about?"

"That I can not tell you, sir; but he sometimes sat for hours at this very table here and stared into space, just thinking."

"When we broke in the door," Brenlin said thoughtfully, "I noticed that the key was lying on the floor."

"Yes, sir. Mr. Carter always locked himself in this room. I presume that when we forced the door, the key fell from the lock, sir."

"Unquestionably," Brenlin returned, trying to keep the note of sarcasm out of his tone, which he knew was there despite his effort. "In the note found on the desk at his elbow, Mr. Carter merely said that he was tired of living and had decided to end it all."

"I have many times heard him say that same thing, sir," Jarvis said, shaking his head gravely, and looking at the huddled body in the chair with sorrowful eyes.

Brenlin Gets a Clue

A SUDDEN question leaped to Brenlin's lips, but he smothered it. He would have to employ an extreme measure of caution with this man. He was inordinately cunning; and there was nothing to point to his connection with the murder of Gardner Carter.

He glanced sharply at the butler. The man's eyes were bright, with the glint of hard, polished metal. Brenlin frowned. Jarvis was not inclined for more than desultory conversation. He seemed to possess the gift of making silence eloquent. Brenlin watched him half resentfully; but there was nothing for him to do but wait, bide his time, lie in hiding like a silent, watchful specter, ready to spring at the opportune moment. Brenlin knew in his own mind that he was right; that Hiller had been totally wrong in his quick assumption that Carter had committed suicide. On the other hand, possibly the good-natured inspector had been merely offering him a chance to accomplish something that would give him a boost in the department.

"That's all for the present, Jarvis," Brenlin said pleasantly enough. "When Mr. Lanier comes, show him in here. We'll be through in another hour."

"Very good, sir." The butler looked at Brenlin for a second very intently. Then he turned and walked across the room toward the door.

Brenlin watched his back as he went. The man did not turn, but opened the door and went out into the hall with his deliberate stride. The door closed after him.

Swiftly, Brenlin slipped the door key from his pocket and studied it for a second under the lamp-light. It was a large, bronze key of no particular distinction. He had an idea that this was not the original key, but only a duplicate.

He glanced sharply about the room. Then he took the thing from his pocket that he had fished out of the ashes in the grate. It was the stub of a cigarette—with a monogram that had been half burned away. He studied it for a long time, a perplexed frown furrowing his brow. This was the only bit of evidence he had to prove clearly to him that Carter had had a caller some time during the evening. The monogram on the cigarette had been burned so far off that it could not be made out, but the letter was Old English, and had been printed in pale-blue ink.

He placed the cigarette stub back in his pocket and hurried across the room to a small, flat-topped desk standing shadowed in one corner. He pulled open the top drawer and found within a heap of papers, and some old, dusty

legal documents. Hastily, cautiously, he went through them, but found nothing of any particular interest.

He was about to shove the drawer shut when of a sudden he caught sight of a small slip of torn paper. He picked it up quickly and glanced at it. The frown left his face; his eyes lighted eagerly.

Scrawled across the paper in a fine hand was a list of securities, a notation of the value of each, the year in which it matured, and the name of the broker that had issued the bonds; and at the bottom of the slip of paper Carter had signed his name.

Brenlin drew in his breath suddenly. From his pocket he jerked the note he had found upon Carter's table, at his very elbow, when first he had entered the room with Jarvis.

The Clutching Shadow!

HE COMPARED the two signatures carefully. Then a grim smile settled over his face. He put the piece of paper with the figures upon it in his pocket quickly and whirled about, reaching for the gun in his pocket. That shadow, that strange, mysterious shadow he had seen upon the wall once before, suddenly darted before his vision. It appeared to be directly above him, right over the desk.

"Good God!" he uttered under his breath; "there's someone in this room somewhere!" He stood motionless, listening, watching; but there was no sound save the moaning of the wind outside, and the rattle of the rain against the windows. He slowly, cautiously turned his head and looked up at the spot on the wall above the desk. The shadow was gone!

Puzzled, perplexed, fascinated by that queer thing, he moved to the center of the room and stood for an instant breathless. He had a sudden desire to get out of the room for a few minutes. He looked at the windows; crossed to them; brushed the draperies aside and stared out into the blackness of the night. He shivered a little in spite of himself. There was some mystery here. No doubt of it.

Jimmie Brenlin was no coward. He had come up from the police ranks to his present position as a member of the homicide squad; but one thing he had learned early in the game—and that was never to take unnecessary chances.

He turned, with his back to the windows, his fingers gripped around the butt of his gun, and looked at the desk in the far corner of the room. He raised his eyes to the wall above it. There was a tense moment. Then he relaxed and smiled a little.

The thing came to him in a flash. Over the fireplace, rather high up in the wall, was a small window with opaque glass in it. Presumably placed there for ornamental purposes, it went unnoticed by the casual observer. To Brenlin, however, standing staring up at it, it suddenly took on a new significance. He had noted it when he had first entered this room. There had been nothing unusual about it—but now there was a glow of light behind it!

He stood watching the window, fascinated. He saw a shadow cross it. Swiftly he glanced at the spot on the wall above the desk—and saw the faint, dark shadow of a hand and arm reflected upon the wall again.

What lay back of or beyond that window? Who was there, and for what purpose? These thoughts shot through his mind like a raging torrent. Brenlin was finding it difficult to preserve a balance now between curiosity and caution. The sheer mystery of this singular case startled him. It had all looked simple enough in the beginning.

The light behind the opaque window suddenly went out. Brenlin stepped forward almost involuntarily. His eyes swept the room with a quick, suspicious look. He found himself in a momentary state of bewilderment; but the

bewilderment passed with the grim determination that leaped lightning-like into his mind. He was wasting time. The medical examiner would arrive at any moment now; only the storm had delayed him this long; and with his coming Brenlin would find himself checked to a certain extent.

He leaped across the room and caught hold of the door that opened into the hall. He gave it a swift pull, and to his amazement he discovered that the door was either locked or stuck.

He put both hands upon the knob and pulled with all his strength, but the heavy door yielded not an inch. He stepped back, surveyed the door in a puzzled manner for an instant; and as he stood watching it, the door swung open almost noiselessly, and Jarvis, the butler, stepped into the room.

"Young Mr. Lanier has arrived, sir," the man said suavely. "He just drove up. Shall I ask him to come in here, sir?"

Brenlin thought swiftly. He had no time to think of the astonishing manner in which the door had been locked.

"Send him in here," he said coolly, looking directly into the butler's eyes. He reached out and caught hold of the door so that the man could not close it after him. He stood there firmly rooted.

"Yes, sir." Jarvis turned and walked back into the dimness of the gloomy old hall. Brenlin heard the soft patter of his steps.

More Mystery

"THAT'S damned funny!" Brenlin muttered. He quickly made an examination of the lock, but found no key to the solution. He was convinced that the door had been locked. Another thing struck him as being most extraordinary. Lanier, Carter's cousin, had arrived in a singularly soundless manner. If he had driven up to the broad veranda overlooking the driveway, his car certainly would have made some noise, even above the swish of the wind and rain.

Brenlin suddenly began to think that he was being a fool, that he was taking unnecessary chances. He would be alone here in this ghastly, silent, mysterious old house with two men—both of whom might or might not have some connection with the murder, and both of whom might, in a tight place, prove exceedingly desperate and formidable opponents.

He heard the sound of voices in the hall, followed by the dull slam of a heavy door. He heard the sound of swiftly moving feet. He stepped back from the door a little.

Jarvis came through the door followed by a tall, rather dark man of no definite age. He might have been thirty, he might have been forty. He swept the butler aside and hurried across toward the body sprawled in the chair at the table. He raised the dead man's head with a cry, and gazed into his face.

"My God!" he uttered hoarsely. "He's often talked of it, Jarvis—but I never believed he'd actually do it." He moved back a step and placed his hands to his face. He seemed filled with some overwhelming emotion.

Brenlin stood silently watching the man. He noted that he was very well dressed. As he watched, the man spun about and looked at him suddenly.

Their eyes clashed. Brenlin surveyed him steadily, piercingly. He was conscious of a swift feeling of dislike, mistrust, sweeping over him. There was something furtive in the other's glance; his face was thin and hawk-like, despite the fact that he was a very handsome man.

His lips were thin and tight; there was a cruel twist to his mouth. Brenlin took all those details in with a single, searching look.

"You're from police headquarters?" Lanier asked in a sharp, guttural voice.

"Of the homicide squad," Brenlin replied gravely.

"Have you any reason to believe that my cousin was murdered?" Lanier questioned quickly, jerking his head around and staring in a horrified manner at the dead man.

"After a thorough investigation," Brenlin said coolly, "I've come to the conclusion that Mr. Carter committed suicide."

Lanier seemed to catch his breath quickly. He made a motion with one hand. He took off his soft hat and laid it upon the table; slipped from his raincoat, and passed it to Jarvis, who came across toward him swiftly and took the coat.

Brenlin noted that the man's hair was sleek and almost black. He wore a splendidly tailored sack-suit of dark brown. His hands were slim and white. He was, in every detail, the personification of a gentleman of leisure.

"What's to be done!" Lanier cried in a half-excited manner.

"There's nothing to be done until the medical examiner arrives and makes his report," Brenlin answered evenly. He felt that Lanier was surreptitiously trying to analyze him.

"Because of my belief that Mr. Carter committed suicide," Brenlin went on slowly, "I have placed no restraining order upon anyone's coming in or going out of this house." He shot a quick look at Lanier to see what effect his words might have; but the man was bending over Carter and muttering unintelligible words.

Brenlin looked at Jarvis. He was standing back out of the glow of light from the lamp.

"You may leave the room, Jarvis," Brenlin said. "I want to ask Mr. Lanier some questions."

"That isn't necessary. It isn't necessary at all," Lanier cut in suddenly, straightening up and casting a furtive glance at Brenlin. "Jarvis has been with poor old Carter for more than ten years. I think he has a right to remain in this room."

"Leave the room, Jarvis!" Brenlin said sharply.

Behind Locked Doors

THE butler glanced at Brenlin; then he looked at Lanier. Brenlin had the feeling that a singular sort of look had been exchanged by the two men.

Lanier shrugged his shoulders. There was a curious sort of expression upon his face, but he said nothing.

"If you need me, sir, just step to the door and call," Jarvis said, with a certain signifi- cance that was not lost upon Brenlin, who was watching him closely. The butler made his way across the room and opened the door. Brenlin, still watching him, thought that he saw the man's hand slip down toward the lock of the door. He waited for the servant to make his exit into the hall; then he walked across to the door, slipped the bronze key from his own pocket and carefully inserted it into the lock and turned it over. He then took out his pen-knife and wedged the blade of it in with the key.

He swung around on his heel to find Lanier looking at him with eyes that were a trifle too bright. The man's mouth was twisted into a half-crooked smile.

"You fellows from police headquarters take a lot of liberties," he said harshly. "Why are you locking that door?"

Brenlin shoved his hand into his pocket and closed his

fingers over the automatic. He moved back toward Lanier with a faint smile.

"So we won't be disturbed while we're talking, Mr. Lanier," he said quietly. "Will you sit down?"

"No—I'll stand, if it's all the same to you." There was an ugly note in the man's voice.

Brenlin merely inclined his head in slight acknowledgement. There was a grim resolution, a definite plan of action, now mapped out in his mind. He was almost certain of his ground.

He took hold of a small chair and dragged it across, close to the table, sat down astride it; felt through his pockets, as if in search of something.

"I understand that you're related to Mr. Carter," Brenlin began in a mild, casual tone.

"I'm his cousin," Lanier responded acidly. "I'll take charge of the house and the details of the funeral—when you fellows get through meddling."

"You understand, it's only our duty to investigate these things," Brenlin said with a smile. "We don't do it from choice. When did you see Mr. Carter alive last?"

"Two weeks ago," Lanier replied shortly. He looked at Brenlin in a sort of contemptuous manner. Then he turned and laid one hand upon the dead man's shoulder. "Must you keep him here all night?"

"He must be left precisely as he was found until the medical examiner arrives," Brenlin answered gravely. He began a slow, methodical search through his pockets again. "It's too damned bad I have to sit out here without anything to smoke, he remarked, with a slight gesture.

"What do you want—a cigarette?" Lanier snapped.

"I'd walk a mile for one," Brenlin said humorously.

"I wish to God you would—and get out of here—leave me alone with him." Lanier put his hand into his pocket with a quick, nervous movement and took out a gold cigarette case. "Here—I'll supply you with something to smoke if that'll speed you along."

"Thanks." Brenlin rose and reached for one of the white tubes in the open case. He withdrew it in a seemingly imperturbable manner and placed it in his mouth; but his blood was coursing through his brain at fever heat. With one swift glance he had seen the Old English letter—the pale-blue monogram.

"Now tell me you need matches!" Lanier fairly snarled.

"That's one thing I have plenty of." Brenlin struck a match and touched the flame to the tip of the cigarette. Then with a sudden amazing swiftness and dexterity, he leaped from his chair again and reached out, his fingers closed over the wrist of Lanier. The man uttered a sharp, startled cry.

"What are you doing!" he snarled hoarsely.

"Lanier," Brenlin said in a low, tense voice, "you're a liar. You were in this room tonight!"

On the Right Track

"WHO said so?" Lanier cried, trying to break the other's grip upon his wrist. "Take your hand away before I—" With his free hand, he reached over and seized the automatic pistol lying on the table, but Brenlin was too quick for him. He brought his clenched fist down upon the man's arm in a crushing blow; the revolver was jerked from the other's hand and went spinning across the rug.

"Never mind that!" Brenlin shot out; "and remember that I've got you covered with this hand in my pocket. Sit down!" He whirled Lanier around and shoved him into the chair.

"Damn you!" the man snarled. "What are you up to?"

"You're the one who knows the most about Carter's death," Brenlin said in a level tone. "Whether you are or are not his cousin is beside the point; but you were in this room with him tonight."

"That's a lie!" Lanier half rose from the chair and settled back again with a hoarse laugh. "Oh, well, go on—you fellows have to go through all this third degree stuff to earn your salary."

"Exactly." Brenlin smiled grimly. He took the burning cigarette from his mouth and held it out before the eyes of the man in the chair.

"This cigarette and this monogram," he said quietly, "are precisely like one I found in the ashes of the grate there. You put it there—tonight."

Lanier laughed. He shrugged his shoulder and made a contemptuous gesture with one slim hand.

"That's funny," he said sarcastically.

"So far, so good," Brenlin went on in a quiet, conversational tone. "On your finger is a large seal ring—" he backed away a little and slipped the gun from his pocket and held it in a convenient position. "Now, up there—" he pointed to the opaque window high above the fireplace, "is a window. What's behind it, I don't know. Possibly some sort of small room or closet."

"To hell with you!" Lanier leaped to his feet with a stifled snarl of rage.

"Don't get nervous," Brenlin smiled. "Remember, I am the law—and it is only necessary for me to pull the trigger to protect myself. Lanier, you didn't drive up to this house since I've been here. You've been in it all evening—ever since Carter was killed. You were careless enough to switch on a light up there back of that window. You can see for yourself that the lamp-light in this room is very dim, almost shadowy. The reflection of your hand, the shadow, was thrown upon the wall over there above that desk. I know it was your hand, for I noted the slight elevation upon the finger that has the ring around it. Naturally, it showed in the shadow. Now wait just a minute—" he snatched up the automatic from the floor and shoved it into his pocket; he hurried across the room; with a single, swift movement he slipped the pen-knife and key from the lock and jerked the door open. "Come in, Jarvis!" He shoved the gun into the pit of the butler's stomach and caught him by the back of the neck; he fairly hurled the man into the room. Before the servant could get his breath, Brenlin had frisked him and discovered that he was unarmed.

"Keep your mouth closed, Jarvis!" Lanier snarled. "This fellow is crazy!"

Without a word, Brenlin seized Jarvis by the wrist, shot one hand into his inner pocket, while he held the gun against his breast. He brought his hand away with a long, bulky envelope in it.

With a startled cry of rage and consternation, Jarvis tried to strike the gun down; and simultaneously with the movement, Lanier leaped across the room.

Jarvis Squawks

BRENLIN had been watching him out of the corner of his eye. He sidestepped and half swung around.

"Boys!" he said grimly. "Stand still or you're both dead men." He ran across the room, going around on the other side of the table. He ripped open the bulky envelope with one hand; tossed the contents out; took a single glance at them; and looked into the faces of the two men before him. At that precise moment there came the faint sound of a running motor off in the driveway.

"Confederates, co-workers, you two," Brenlin uttered triumphantly. "This is one of those cases that has worked backward. I got the result before I got the motive, which is still very vague, Lanier. Only this: you shot Carter at close range with this German automatic. You placed him in that chair and scrawled the note yourself. You didn't do a very good job of handwriting, when it came to matching up. Carter had these bonds in his possession—that's what you were after. Don't move!"

"Damn you!" Lanier, beating his hands together in a paroxysm of fear and rage. "How'd you find all that out?"

"Your motive in murdering Carter was to gain possession of these bonds. Possibly you had a fight over them. Mere details that will come out later. It was a pretty slick job all the way round, but you boys never learn that the slightest clue always starts a train of thought in a detective's mind. In this instance, it was the half-burned blue monogram on one of your cigarettes—"

The door across the room was shoved in suddenly. Jarvis whirled around with a suppressed cry. His face was pasty white.

"I told you it was dangerous, Mr. Lanier!" he cried huskily. "I didn't want to do it—I didn't want to do it—not even for the money that was in it; but they'll never send me to the chair for it. You killed him! I heard the fight—I heard the shot—I helped you put him in the chair. My God! Now they'll send us both to prison!"

Brenlin lowered the gun he held in his hand with a faint smile. Hiller was standing framed in the doorway in his dripping raincoat, and right back of him was the medical inspector.

"Attaboy!" Hiller boomed, stepping into the room. "I knew damn well you had it in you, kid; but you got a lucky break at that. Step in, Doc—it's all over but the irons and a couple of shots of juice for these birds. Say, my boys are trained to see clues in the dark!" he chuckled.

"Did you know Carter had been murdered?" Brenlin gasped as he reached automatically into his pocket and took out a pair of handcuffs.

"Sure," Hiller laughed, slipping a second pair of manacles from his raincoat pocket. "I picked up a gold pencil under the table there with an 'L' monogrammed on it."

NEXT MONTH KAIN O'DARE

former inmate of many penal institutions, reveals in his own words startling prison secrets in his amazing story

MY SEVENTEEN YEARS AMONG PRISON RIOTERS

By all means be sure to read this story. It appears in the APRIL issue of
STARTLING DETECTIVE ADVENTURES

On Sale March 10th

Landru, Super Bluebeard

By GEORGE GROAT

More revelations in the sinister career of the monster who, through some strange, psychic power, gained the love and confidence of nearly 300 women only to slay many of them for the money it yielded him.

WHAT HAS GONE BEFORE:

HENRY LANDRU, later to be called the world's most inhuman monster, was born in 1869. As a lad he was commended for his good habits and upright conduct. His first foray into crime came after he was mustered out of the army and became a thief. In 1902 the French police arrested him and he served three years for embezzlement. After serving out his time he continued in his career of crime. In 1914 he turned his attention and talents to women and from that time on until his arrest in April, 1919, the French Bluebeard's life is one kaleidoscopic record of illicit love and murder.

AFTER the murder of Mme. Cuchet and her son in a villa rented with her money, Landru shrewdly laid low for a time. Passersby had complained of the foul odor that permeated the night air as a result of his burning of the bodies, but he had cleverly allayed the suspicions of the police.

But at the end of a fortnight Landru began advertising again. Sly, sinister and seductive, he knew that the extraordinary mistrustfulness of the French middle-class woman vanished at the word marriage.

Finally, a Madame Elsie Laporte, whose husband had been killed in Alsace leaving her the equivalent of \$40,000, answered Landru's appeal and they met by appointment in the lounge at the Grand Hotel in Paris. She was pretty, refined and her money dangled before Bluebeard's eyes as a prize indeed.

To the "love nest" Landru enticed her and they ate several cozy little dinners and took in burlesque shows. Landru's efforts to fascinate the rather skittish war widow nearly cost him dearly, for evidently she suspected him, laid a plot and for a few seconds his life trembled in the balance.

Landru had given his name to her as Raoul Dupont. An accident of which he was in ignorance was that a few days before moving their belongings to a *troisieme* in the Place Dancourt, Madame Laporte had been in a taxi with a



He clasped her in his arms and pressed his lips passionately to hers. The murder trap was about to be sprung.

friend of hers, Madame Picard, when she had pointed Landru out as her fiance, Raoul Dupont, when she saw him hurrying along on the opposite side of the street.

"You must be mistaken, my dear," exclaimed Madame Picard. "That is not Monsieur Dupont but Henri Mignot. He met me in the Metro six months ago and asked me

to go to his apartment in the Rue des Petits-Champs." "Most curious," remarked Elsie. "He surely cannot be the same man."

Madame Picard then described Landru's sitting room so well that she sowed seeds of distrust in Madame Laporte's mind. Yet, after all they had obtained only a fleeting glimpse of the man, and, besides, she had that day received the following passionate note from Raoul:

"My own sweetheart, my own dear love, the light of my life. When I left you and returned home last night my thoughts were all of you. My home seems so empty and desolate without you. When friendship becomes love, they blend like two streams, of which the one absorbs even the name of the other. In love, today is better than tomorrow; happiness deferred always is lost. Ah, my dear heart, you cannot tell how great and all-absorbing is my love for you. Accept the few little flowers I send and when you smell their perfume, think of me. Tonight we will meet again and until the intervening hours have passed, you will be every moment in the thought of your Raoul."

Almost at the moment Elsie was reading this note Landru was seated in a barely furnished student's room within a few yards of the Sarbonne, bartering with a drug-taking medical student for some highly-dangerous bacteria with which to bring about Elsie's sudden death without danger of detection.

"Take the needle," said the arch-fiend's companion. "Hold it here by the fused-glass handle. All you have to do is to dip the needle into the culture in the tube and then pierce any article of food—bread, candy, fruit. It will be fatal within forty-eight hours. Be sure and call a doctor, because his certificate will be a safeguard from inquiry."

For this Landru paid him 200 francs, lit a cigarette, and airily sauntered out.

Dupe Turns to Tigress

BECAUSE of her suspicions Bluebeard found Elsie Laporte hard to land in his net, but he was particularly gracious to her because of her \$40,000. His egotism and effrontery were amazing. He regarded assassination as a fine art. Though his nature possessed not a shred of romance, yet he successfully posed as a lover of flowers and poetry.

The love lyrics from his favorite poet, de Musset, which he whispered into Elsie's ear as he kissed her and rubbed his silky beard over her neck and shoulders, finally so completely captivated her that she agreed to marry him. They were legally married—this being one of the few times that Landru had been required to go that far—and one week later they left Dijon for a month in Italy. They visited Turin and Milan and finally took an apartment in Genoa.

Although the same sweet, gentle lover, Landru began to tire of the honeymooning at the end of a month, and so, late one night, as the pair were in their sitting room, Landru commenced in a friendly way to discuss their future. For the first time Raoul brought up the subject of money, suggesting that they unite their fortunes. Elsie seemed to think this a reasonable idea and apparently consented.

Landru thereupon crossed to the writing desk and quickly drew up two documents, then, returning, he clasped her in his arms and pressing his lips passionately to hers remarked:

"Sweetheart, it is wretched to have to talk business with one you love so much, so let's sign and get it over."

"Yes, Raoul," replied Elsie in a hard voice. "I will sign—but on the condition that you give me the contents of your suitcase."

Landru was stumped for a moment. "What do you mean?" he countered.

"You know what I mean," replied Elsie. "Now for the first time I know that you are not what you pretend to be. You were Monsieur Mignot to my friend, Madame Picard. I know the truth. Open the suitcase and let me see that little bottle of poison in the velvet-lined box. You have duped me, but I am prepared, my dear, false lover. I have set inquiries on foot and only yesterday learned that you are a jailbird and fortune-hunter and now that you have betrayed your motive I intend to call the police."

"You devil!" hissed Landru. "You have unlocked my bag. You, my wife, whom I trusted!"

"No, your wife, whom you intended to kill!" exclaimed Elsie. "Confess, or I shall press this button and call the police."

With a curse Landru sprang across the table. It was a dramatic moment and Bluebeard's life hung in the balance. Before she could press the electric button, Landru struck her across the head with his bony fist and then, fearing that the noise had disturbed others in the building, he crammed a few things into his pockets, seized his suitcase and bounded out the door.

Once outside he strolled leisurely to the station and boarded an express train twenty minutes later for the French frontier at Ventimiglia and on to Paris. Landru knew full well that his little war-widow would follow by the next train and that it was necessary that he should cover his tracks, so he went to a second-hand dealer with whom he had done business with stolen cars and arranged to have all his belongings taken from his love nest and stored for future use.

Landru then hurried to a small suburb named Enghien, remained there for a few days and then slipped into Paris and returned to his real wife. The police never connected Henri Mignot or Raoul Dupont with Henri Landru, the respectable father of a family living in the capital.

As he had his furniture from Vernouillet in storage, Landru's next move was to find a new retreat. After searching the district carefully he finally ran across an ideal villa about forty miles from Paris on the road to Houdan. The nearest village was Gambais and it could not be seen from the house.

He represented himself as an engineer and, according to his landlord, Monsieur Tric, was punctual in his payments, and came and went at odd times.

Death in a Tangerine

LANDRU'S next victim was Madame Heon—then living at 165 Rue de Rennes. The alluring of victims was not difficult now that he had a trap all set in a lonely place, hidden from the vulgar gaze.

Madame Heon had believed Landru to be genuinely in love with her and she was raised to a seventh heaven of delight by his courting. All she had in the world was her furniture, but furniture seemed to be an obsession with Landru. One poor woman he killed for twenty-eight pounds sterling.

Landru invited Madame Heon to Gambais and bought one single and one return ticket from Paris to Garancieres—the nearest station to Gambais. When the pair arrived at "The Hermitage" it was nearly midnight. On the buffet there stood a tempting dish of tangerines and Madame Heon ate one while Landru smoked and watched her intently from beneath his shaggy brows, wondering how soon the deadly culture would act.

Half an hour later the great criminal hugged and kissed

his victim and they then ascended the stairs. Having partaken liberally of cognac, Landru slept heavily until morning. Madame Heon was no more. Bluebeard smiled sardonically as he examined her, then went downstairs and prepared breakfast for himself and effaced all evidence of the effects of the deadly platinum needle upon the luscious tangerines.

At his former love nest there were neighbors to think about, but here in "The Hermitage" there was nobody to watch or smell. Consequently, Landru dismembered the body and burned it bit by bit in the red hot kitchen stove. By night only a couple of scuttlesful of ashes and calcined bones remained. These he carried into a freshly-plowed field behind the house and scattered.

Using his return ticket he returned to his family that night and on the morrow sold Madame Heon's effects to a crafty old dealer named Caillard for a little more than \$300. The only thing he kept was an old squirrel boa which was found with other souvenirs in his garage after his arrest.

Already the arch-fiend had two other victims in view—a Madame Buisson and a certain Madame Collomb. The latter was a good-looking woman of forty-one, a widow with about \$1,200 in bank.

She had a lover when Landru met her, but she soon found herself charmed by the new thrills furnished by the ugly, black-bearded suitor and Landru quickly displaced her former sweetheart. This time Landru posed as a furniture dealer. He spent Christmas night, 1916, at her flat in 15 Rue Rodier and on that evening proposed marriage and was accepted.

Next day Bluebeard drove her to Gambais in his car and it was a happy party that dined at St. Cyr. Little did she dream that she was going to her death.

"I hope you will excuse the absence of my servant," said the perfect lover as they entered "The Hermitage." "Here we shall live my darling." But the poor woman was dead six hours later as a result of eating from a box of chocolates.

Landru had not relished the hard work entailed by his method of disposing of Mme. Heon, so this time he cut up the body with a butcher knife and packed the dismembered remains in two sugar sacks, after first having poured acid over the face and hands so as to render identification impossible.

After dark the next night he bundled the sacks into his car and set off on the road to St. Pierre, which runs along the cliffs. At a little jetty which projects into the sea he pulled up, slashed the sacks with a pocket knife and threw them into the roaring sea below. He knew that the remains would be scattered far and wide through the slits he had made in the bags.

To Landru—at heart a fierce hater of women owing to a peculiar mental condition known to alienists the world over—the life of a woman meant no more than that of a mosquito.

Having disposed of Madame Collomb's remains, Landru returned to Gambais and penned a note to Madame Buisson, marked down as his next victim:

"Pray pardon my silence, my darling, but I have been absent from Paris upon my business affairs," he wrote. "I

find that without you, my dear heart, I cannot live. My life is dark and full of despair now that I have not seen you for so long. Your face is the sun of my life and your sweet smile the zenith of my happiness. Night and day I languish, and deep was my sorrow when, on our last meeting, your bright eyes brought grief to me. Yet love changes all to joy and if you love me I care not what I suffer. Alas, tonight I have to keep a business appointment, but on Wednesday at six I expect to call upon you. Till then each hour passes very slowly.—Your loving and devoted Andre."

Andre Charcroix was the name he had given to her.

Dead Rise to Accuse

HE HAD arranged to spend the night with his real wife, and enroute home he stopped and bought a copy of the *Paris Matin*. What was his surprise to find big headlines and a story of the disappearance of Madame Cuchet and her son—two of his early victims.

"The affair has created considerable excitement at Verncuillet," said the journal. "The mysterious Monsieur Diard told Madame Cuchet's relatives that she had gone with her son to London; but inquiries made of Scotland Yard, and search of the passport registers, have failed to find any trace of the missing mother and son. It also is alleged that Monsieur Diard, who had promised marriage to Madame Cuchet, already has seized all her possessions and sold them. At present the affair is a sensational mystery which Monsieur Friedmann declares he will unravel at all costs. The police request that any information concerning the man whose description is given should be reported in confidence to any poste de police."

Landru's sinister face relaxed into a smile as he read the story. With every change of address he had assumed a new alias so there was no danger on that score. However, the description might be very embarrassing, so his first act upon alighting in Paris was to visit a barber shop and have his beard trimmed a different style. He would have had it entirely shaved off, only he took pride in it and knew that it appealed to a certain type of woman.

That night he visited his garage and placed the identification papers and rings of Madame Collomb with the rings, haircombs and other souvenirs of his previous victims in a secret box. It was a strange trait of his degenerate sex-perversity that he should cherish souvenirs of innocent women in such a cold-blooded manner.

This craze in the end proved his undoing.

Landru was on friendly terms with a rascally old lawyer named Jean Boas, whose specialty was handwriting. He called on Boas the following day and paid him 200 francs to forge Madame Collomb's signature and the signature of fictitious witnesses on two negotiable documents that permitted Landru to withdraw all her money from the bank and to dispose of the furniture in her flat at 15 Rue Rodier.

By the assassination of this poor woman, Bluebeard enriched himself to the sum of 385 pounds sterling, of which forty had gone as expenses of the venture. It was a small



As Henri Landru looked at the height of his career of illicit love and murder.

sum for so great a risk, but to Landru the joy came not so much from the amount of money made, but from the endeavor to bring murder to a fine art.

One evening Landru noted with his quick eye a young girl, about twenty, sobbing in an isolated corner of a subway entrance. She was dark-haired, dressed neatly and wore an innocent look. The arch-criminal never lost time. He walked up and spoke to her sympathetically and in conversation he found out that her name was Andree Babelay and that she had been a shop-girl who had lost her job and had not a sou.

Landru told her his name was Lucien Gullet and comforted her and finally induced her to accompany him to his little "nest of love" in the Rue de Mauberge.

After living with her for a fortnight, Landru took Andree to Gambais, buying one single ticket and one return. He bought her a bicycle and she was often seen in Houdan. This love romance continued for another fortnight and she might have escaped the usual fate of Landru's lovers had she not, quite by accident, run across a story in a magazine telling of the terrible escapades of the "man with a beard" at Vernouillet.

The description given in Bon Soir fitted her lover and she held her breath. Surely Lucien could not be a foul murderer. Then it all came to her. She had once opened his brown bag and had seen letters signed by Andre Cuchet—the name of the youth who had been murdered.

"Lucien did you ever live at Vernouillet?" she asked him unexpectedly that night.

"What makes you ask that, you silly little fool?" replied Landru, very much taken aback.

"Because this is your description and because I saw a letter in your handbag. I see now why you seldom go to railway stations and wear your spectacles and change your hat and clothes whenever you go—"

But she never finished the sentence, for Landru seized her and then pulled a Browning pistol from his pocket and shot her through the chest. The poor, disillusioned girl staggered a few feet and fell dead at his feet. Landru walked into the dining-room, drank heavily of cognac, buried the cartridge in the garden where it was found three years later, and prepared to get rid of the body.

The next forenoon he motored several miles to an unfrequented spot in a deep woods and there dug a grave about six feet deep. After dark he loaded the body in his car, buried little Andree in that lonely place and retracted his steps to "The Hermitage."

Afterward, not daring to go to Paris owing to the hue and cry, he wrote his wife saying that he was being detained in the country. Landru had enough for his immediate needs, but he had to have a potential source for his future needs, so he again thought of Madame Buisson. He had neglected her too long while toying with the penniless girl who had nearly cost him his freedom.

His acquaintance with Madame Buisson was the fatal mistake he made. Had the Bluebeard not met her, as will later be seen, his arrest might not have been effected for a long time.

How the Paris police, aided by desperate women who had evaded Landru's murderous clutches penetrated his disguises and linked up his ever-changing names, effected his arrest, conviction and execution will be told in the final installment of this article appearing in Startling Detective Adventures for April, on sale March 10.

A New Era in the Control of Crime

THE constantly intruding question forced by the prevalence of crime as to whether the state or the criminal element that flouts it is the stronger is getting the answer rather pointedly in important spots these days that the state is not alone the stronger but that its might is rapidly increasing.

Headed by President Hoover's crime commission similar bodies all over the country are studying crime, getting fundamental knowledge as to its causes, sources, learning how it may be curtailed at its start and how it may be best handled when it rears its ugly head in full maturity. These explorations are richly financed and are being conducted by men of brains and zeal in the cause. Judged by the results of such intelligent approaches to the solution of other problems, criminologists predict that a new era in the control of crime is about to be ushered in in America.

These crime commissions are the modern, civilized substitute for the Vigilantes of pioneer days. They plan to do legally what the Vigilantes did illegally but back of both movements is the same menacing spirit that avows that the public has had about all the outlawry it will tolerate.

IT IS safe to predict that these crime commissions are going to report that drugs are responsible for the large number of crimes of extreme violence. The morons who commit these crimes would be unequal to them without the driving urge of drugs. That the drug problem will

not be easily solved is suggested by the declaration by the New York Board of Narcotic Control that narcotics are smuggled into this country from 32 legitimate factories in eight highly civilized nations. It insists that narcotics are the controlling influence in the annual disappearance of 65,000 young girls. Further, it reports there are three drug addicts to one alcoholic addict in American prisons today.

The enforcement of the prohibition law seems to be largely up to the drinkers. Except in border cities it has now become practically impossible or at least extremely difficult to obtain liquor that is anything short of poison.

Universities have started developing police schools as part of the general attack on crime. Major Calvin H. Goddard, expert in ballistics, has recently become head of the scientific crime detection laboratory affiliated with Northwestern university. It is amply financed and will have every physical equipment. It will have experts in chemistry, photography, handwriting, pathology, toxicology, microphotography, and anatomy. It will be able to identify the very least trace left by a criminal.

The University of Chicago has installed August Vollmer, former California police chief and a master of police department organization, as head of its police school. He will not alone attempt to develop scientific detectives able to win in a matching of wits with the sharpest crooks, but also to train men in working effectively in the prevention of crime.

From Wall Street to a Lifer's Cell

By

Thomas J. Wainwright

The activities of a master criminal, who dealt only in the highest stakes, are related in this amazing autobiography written from a prison cell!

LAST month Thomas J. Wainwright related an amazing tale of his career in crime, his activities ranging from unimportant house and store robberies to the promotion of an investment company with operations running into hundreds of thousands of dollars. He told, too, of brief excursions into legitimate enterprises from which he always returned to the greater financial rewards offered by a life of crime. With forged credentials and letters of recommendation, Wainwright succeeded in obtaining a position as butler in the home of Dr. Pinault in Minneapolis. In this, the concluding installment of his story, he relates the astounding happenings which took place after he entered the Pinault home as an employee.

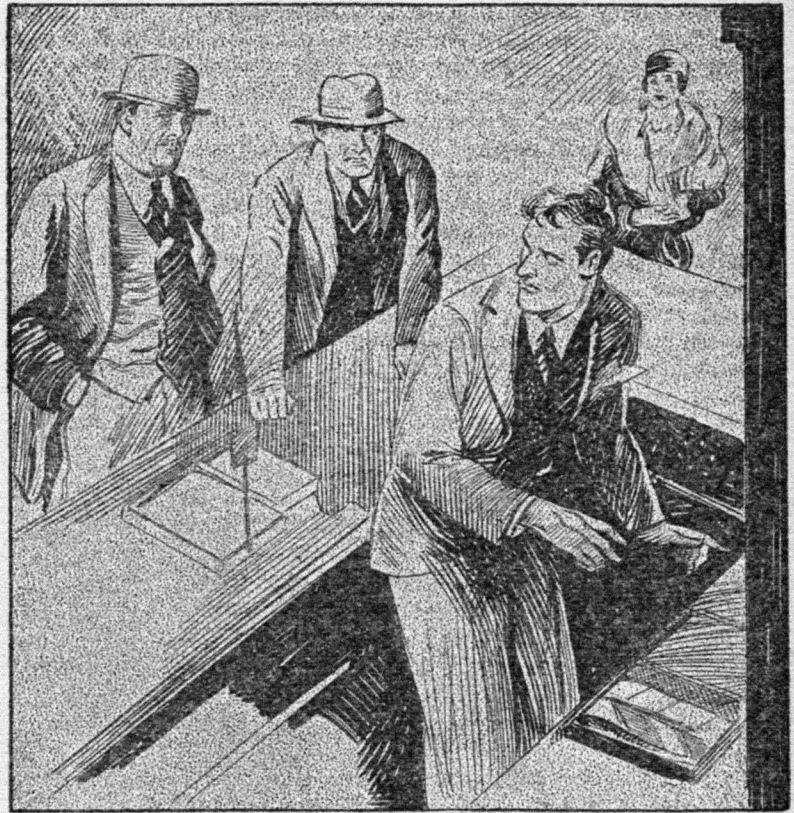
HIS AUTOBIOGRAPHY CONTINUES:

THE PINAULT home was located on the crest of Lowry Hill. Here, among the homes of wealth, was the Countess Pinault's residence. Its exterior gave no evidence of the priceless works of art that were lodged within its walls. Magnificent Oriental rugs covered the floors. Gobelin tapestries hung from the walls of the drawing-room. Adorning the walls of the three main rooms of the lower floor were works of art from the hands of the world's most famous painters, the values ranging from \$5,000 to \$100,000 each. Visitors from all parts of the world came to view these priceless treasures.

Into these surroundings I made my appearance as butler and houseman. Although I never had had any experience as a trained butler, my knowledge of social usages carried me safely through. My neatly-fitting Tuxedo suit which I had worn at other social functions in more prosperous days put the hall-mark on my services at these dinners.

Ten days before Thanksgiving, the entire family left their Lowry Hill house for their winter residence at their Pass Christian, Miss., estate, leaving me in complete charge of the house and contents. In addition to his town residence described above, the Doctor owned a large country estate about twenty-five miles from Minneapolis.

This suburban estate was in charge of an elderly



I looked up just in time to see Jim Howard and another detective coming toward me as though expecting trouble.

Frenchman, who had the title of "Superintendent." After the Pinault family were located on their Southern plantation, the Superintendent made it a practice to drive in to Minneapolis two or three times a week to visit me and to see if I was attending to my duties about the house. I immediately sized up this talkative, genial Frenchman as a faithful watchdog and acted accordingly.

In his crude way he put the acid test on me. I was always on the job, with one exception, and declined all invitations to go down town to drink liquor and see the "girls." His confidence was easily secured, but he was ever my "bete noir," as will be explained later. But for this gentleman, my loot would have been much greater.

After a careful survey of the inside of the house, I went down to a locksmith and bought a lot of key blanks, trunk and bureau drawer keys of all sizes—filing these to the proper shapes, I opened every locked drawer and closet in the house, including the door to the wine cellar.

I did not, at this time, appropriate to my own use any of the countless valuable articles, which careful

examination had revealed to me; they could wait until the proper time came to convert them into cash.

What most interested me was the vault in the cellar. I carefully studied the door and design. It had been installed quite a number of years, as was proved by the dial and by the loose, wide openings at the bottom and sides of the door. It could easily have been opened by wedges, but this method would have destroyed the door and made my disappearance imperative. This I wished to avoid. So, obtaining the necessary drills, I took a chance, and in a half hour had the door open and the combination numbers. Neatly plugging the drill hole with a three-eighths-inch piece of iron, I painted and enameled it to compare with the rest of the door. Also I replaced the cobwebs that had covered the dial and hinges. Attention to details is ever necessary to all enterprises if you wish to attain complete success therein.

It was at a time when I was busily engaged with my brokerage office affairs and had left the house at 9 a. m., leaving a man in the stable to saw wood and keep a watchful eye on the house. It was after 5 p. m. before I returned. The hired man had gone home, so I could not get his report of the day's happenings. Early the next morning the Superintendent drove in. He got down to business at once. "You were away yesterday?"

"Yes," I replied, "I was not feeling well and had to go to a doctor. I have nostalgia, a bad case," putting my hand on my stomach and assuming a pained expression.

"Ah, so, poor boy, you have been working too hard, I see that." Then, continuing, he said: "I received a telegram from the doctor and was obliged to go to the vault for a business paper."

Gee whiz! I thought. He must be wise. So I stalled over by the door as I casually inquired if he found what he was looking for. Yes, he had found it, but was worried at not finding me at home, and seeing the strange man sawing wood. In fact, he had stayed at a downtown hotel that night, in order to see me at an early hour the next day. I explained away the hiring of the wood sawyer, as a poor man I was helping.

I cite this occurrence as a proof of how closely I was watched and under what difficulties I labored to carry on a Doc Jekyll and Mr. Hyde existence—a butler on Lowry Hill; a banker and broker in the financial district—an occupant of a mansion, and at the same time a permanent guest at the West Hotel, with parlor, bedroom and bath. It was at least a lively existence, full of thrills, with no dark, drab days.

An Elaborate Plan

I BEGAN to believe in my lucky star, and I had a good reason for it. To land in Minneapolis broke, and in the space of a few months, maneuver myself

into possession of a fortune, with no help or assistance from anyone except the use of the few brains I had in my head.

The night I opened the vault door, by using the combination previously obtained, will never be forgotten. The floor of the vault was covered with baskets containing the family silverware and gold services. At the farther end of the vault, on a wooden platform, was a twenty-drawer steel safe deposit box, in one of whose keyholes hung a bunch of keys. Inside was the master key. It took a long time to examine the contents of all the drawers.

At 4 a. m. I quit and went upstairs to get a few hours sleep. I kept this up for a week, from midnight to 4 a. m., before I completed examining everything in the boxes. The only thing I took at this time was a bag of foreign money, francs and Italian lira. These I exchanged at a bank for about \$300 U. S. money. Among the valuables I found in the vault were bank stocks, elevator stocks, railroad stocks and bonds, all gilt-edge stuff and at the market value of over \$280,000.

But perhaps the most interesting find in these steel boxes was the safe deposit key of Dr. Pinault's box at the Minneapolis Trust Company. How to get the contents of this safe deposit box was the most important problem which confronted me. I gave a lot of thought to it, eliminating everything that would involve me in any embarrassing position. A slip at this time meant arrest and the loss of all the loot now almost in my possession.

I solved the matter in this way: Having a thoroughly practical experience in the banking and stock brokerage business, I decided to open a stock broker's office, and after having laid the proper foundation, to open several checking accounts at different banks. By using Dr. Pinault's stocks as collateral, I would secure the greatest amount possible as loans and then disappear.

With this plan in mind I saw Lieutenant Leach (later Mayor of Minneapolis) at his real estate office, in the Rogers Building, and rented from him one of his vacant offices. I fitted it out with mahogany furniture, an expensive rug, typewriter, with a supply of letterheads and cards, and hired a stenographer.

I was all set to play the game down to the last detail, so putting a package of stocks and bonds under my arm, I went to the Minneapolis Trust Company, presented my card, stated briefly I had selected their company as the safest and most reliable with which to do business. Then I unwrapped my package, so the cashier could see the stock certificates, but not discern the names thereon. He was most gracious and personally conducted me downstairs to the custodian in charge, introduced me and requested that my desire for a safe deposit box be immediately complied with.



Thomas J. Wainwright, financial wizard and master crook, whose speculations baffled officials until George S. Dougherty, famous detective, tracked him down.

I must say, in all truth, that nothing could exceed the courtesy and attention bestowed upon me by the officials of this trust company.

Now began the real, thrilling days, when I lived in reality all that any page of fiction could offer to its readers. I was a man of wealth and fashion, and I could prove it. I was in a position to call anyone's bluff just as I called the bluff of the president of one Minneapolis bank.

Cashing In

EVENTS moved smoothly and rapidly. At 10 o'clock every morning I came to the safe deposit section of the Minneapolis Trust Company, opened my box and took out a bundle of sealed stock certificates.

Leaving these at my office with the stenographer, I rushed back to Lowry Hill, jumped into my overalls and stalled about until 2 p. m. Then, slipping off my working clothes, I rode down to my office, secured my package of bonds and stocks, and placed them in my box at the trust company.

How to turn into cash these stocks, bonds and the immense amount of loot that was in my hands was a problem to which I gave much thought. A tentative plan was to put the superintendent in the vault, having first punctured one side of the wall for an air vent; then engage a staff of servants and pass myself off as Dr. Pinault, and sell the house and contents to someone who was unacquainted with Minneapolis affairs. A deal of this magnitude required time to consummate, and many conferences, also some correspondence, with the risk that someone acquainted with Dr. Pinault would become aware of what was being done.

The last Friday I spent on Lowry Hill was occupied in packing five large trunks and four suitcases. One of the articles, which I was forced to leave lying on the drawing-room floor, was a solid silver-winged cupid, 24 inches in height. Its value ran into thousands of dollars, but it was too heavy to put into my trunks and I could not easily carry it.

The next morning, Saturday, I was at my office at 10 a. m. and at 11 I came to the trust company for my safe deposit box. I carried it into the small, private room; in a few minutes I came out and casually mentioned to the official that I needed my other box this morning, No. —. He immediately went to this number, inserted his master key, while I put in Dr. Pinault's key. The door opened and I drew out a very long box. It all happened quicker than the time required to tell of it.

Taking it into the compartment, where lay my other one, I hastily opened it. It contained treasure

BERTILLON MEASUREMENTS

Height	Head Length	L. Foot
75.0	19.0	27.0
Outer Arms	Head Width	L. Mid. F.
76.0	14.6	11.8
Trunk	Chest	L. L. F.
90.5	13.0	9.57
	Length	L. Forearm
	6.3	47.1

Name Thomas J. Wainwright
 Alias E. N. Hedley
 Alias Henry W. Wainwright
 Crime Forgery
 Age 46 1912 Height 5' 9"
 Weight 136 Build Slender
 Hair Dark Eyes Gray
 Born Mass Beard
 Complexion Light
 Date of arrest June 25 1912
 Occupation Bank Officer
 Office Thompson & Cronin, Bankers

REMARKS

I have cut C. 2" x 11" at wrist and up in L. forearm for
T. T. & M. blood and 1" Ph. for R.
Blue dot bet P & R - II T. T. blood bet P & R
Fall 17 12

Three previous terms in prison
Sept. 30 1912 1 to 10 yrs in M. S. P.
Oct 8 1914 Violated Parole - Wanted
Galena - Ill. card

POLICE DEPARTMENT,
MINNEAPOLIS, MINN.

Measured by

Reproduction of Wainwright's record in the Minneapolis Police Bertillon files.

upon treasure—a list of them would require space the size of a page of this magazine. Some, which I remember, were Cardinal Richelieu's gold watch, studded with diamonds; Marie Antoinette's fan, a Pope's ring—a huge affair of heavy gold, with a jewel, surrounded with diamonds and pearls, which fitted the Pope's big toe. There was also a long string of diamonds, graduated from three carats down. This ornament was estimated to be worth \$15,000, but as the diamonds were old mine stones, which would require re-cutting, its real value was somewhat less. There were also pearl necklaces, over fifty rings set with diamonds, pearls, rubies and emeralds; ear rings of all kinds, one of pearls, the size of large cherries; and there was also a large diamond ornament which I sold to a jeweler on West 42nd Street, New York, for \$900 cash. It was later re-sold three times, the last time for something over \$2,500. It was worth over \$5,000, but the diamonds were old mine stones.

Taking everything in the box, I left only the empty jewel cases, and returning the two boxes to their compartments, passed the custodian an expensive Havana cigar. I was on the street a few minutes before noon at which time I knew the trust company closed. I was safe until Monday, when the bank official might discover his error in allowing me to have access to Dr. Pinault's safe deposit box. I had accomplished an almost unbelievable feat—the first and only one of its kind ever put over since banks had inaugurated the system of protection to valuables via the safe deposit route.

Dodging the Law

I SOLD a few diamonds for \$500 and bought a ticket for Omaha, Neb., asking a lot of questions and mentioning Lowry Hill as my residence. This bluff worked, and caused the police to go to Omaha in search of me, just as I expected they would. Later,

I purchased a ticket with Pullman berth on the mid-night express to Chicago.

Before I left my late home, I placed on the floor several loaves of bread, with water and milk, for my pet bull dog. Jim Howard, the Minneapolis detective who brought me back from New York, inquired why I happened to leave a bull dog in the house. "That bull dog was so fierce no one could get inside the door," he said. "Well," I replied, "I left him to protect the house, so no one would get in and loot it." He smiled, as he said: "Why? Was there anything left after you got through?"

Then I doubled back and forth between Pittsburgh, New York City and Boston, never remaining more than two days at any address, ever on the go, knowing full well that it was an idiotic performance to travel with so much easily-traced baggage.

On the day Mr. Dougherty, famous detective who writes for *Startling Detective Adventures*, grabbed me on West 56th Street, in New York, I had engaged two rooms in widely different parts of the city. It was my last move. To the first one went my trunks. Thence, by suitcases, the contents were to be transferred to the second room, so that when the "dicks," who I knew were trailing me, would arrive at my first room, they would find just five empty trunks. It was a fine plan that would have given me time to carry out my Wall Street brokerage scheme, which I had started to develop, to dispose of all the stocks and bonds that were in my possession.

A Fatal Error

ONE second after I gave my address at the 72nd Street branch of the Corn Exchange Bank, I knew I had committed a fatal mistake. But, as I was moving the next day, I thought I would be safe for twenty-four hours anyway. The day of my arrest was the last day Dr. Pinault was willing to pay for the services of the Pinkerton detectives. So narrow was the margin between my safety and arrest.

I had completed all arrangements for opening an elaborately furnished stock broker's office on Wall Street, and inside of ten days, with the bank connections I could make, I would have unloaded all of Dr. Pinault's gilt-edge securities on small country banks, cleaning up at least \$250,000 in cash. With my head whirling from the effects of Sparkling Burgundy and with several thousands of dollars in cash in my pockets, I forgot my customary caution, and slipped on an address. Dougherty got me as I was stepping into a cab. Five seconds later he would have missed me. Such is fate.

Returning to Minneapolis from New York with Detectives Howard and Lawrence, I assisted Dr. Pinault and the president of the Minneapolis Trust Company in recovering the stolen property, pleaded guilty in court and was sentenced to a term of seven and one-half years in the Minnesota State Prison, at Stillwater.

Of my life in this prison, there is but little to say, except it was an active one, mentally. I worked as bookkeeper for the Western Shoe Company and was a teacher in the prison night school, and for two years president of the Prison Chautauqua Circle. In the work of the prison school I was greatly interested, giving lectures on commercial law and teaching higher arithmetic, grammar and history. I was

released after having served about five and one-half years.

After a few weeks' vacation at Lake Minnetonka, I secured work at M. L. Rothschild's big clothing store in Minneapolis. The entire second floor was put in my charge. I made good in this position and earned the good-will and friendship of that wonderful man, Mr. Maurice L. Rothschild.

An incident took place about two weeks after I began work that nearly wrecked my good plans. While busily engaged with customers and salesmen, I faced the elevator just in time to see Jim Howard and another detective step off and come directly towards me. A big bulge on their hips indicated to me they expected trouble. I grasped the situation immediately, and stepping up to Mr. Howard, put out my hand, saying: "Good morning, Jim; something in a nice fall suit for you and your friend?" And taking his arm I led them in back of a stack of clothing.

Jim said: "What in hell are you doing here?"

"It's all right, Jim," I said; "I am the manager here and going straight. No one knows a thing that is wrong with me, and I give you my word I'll do nothing wrong here. All I ask is a chance to prove I am on the level and on the square."

He looked at me for a minute and then at the other detective, smiled and said: "Well, I'll be damned; if you're not the limit. Do you really mean it?"

"Sure I do, Jim. Now please say nothing and I'll be straight."

We all shook hands, as they both said: "You win; go to it, boy!"

I kept my word. I was responsible for thousands of dollars in cash and merchandise, though, and had I the inclination I could easily have ripped open the safes and also carted off a truck load of merchandise, as there were Saturday nights when I was alone with the one watchman and also was in the store mornings from 7 to 8. All I would have needed was one hour to take all I desired. But—I was loyal to Mr. Rothschild, loyal to my friends who trusted me and square with the detectives to whom I had passed my word.

I enlisted in the First Regiment, Minnesota National Guard, Company I., Capt. Andrews, later Major Andrews, commanding. It was strange that no one recognized me as Wainwright, the diamond thief. At the First Regiment Armory, I frequently came face to face with Major Leach, of the artillery, but he never recognized me as his one-time tenant.

Having a few hundred dollars, I opened a stock broker's office in the New Plymouth Building and took a room at Hotel Dyckman. Prospects were good for me to make a success of my venture.

Cleaned Out

IT IS a common thing for all ex-convicts who attain to any degree of prosperity to be leached on and blackmailed by their former associates. My case was no exception. Hardly a day passed without someone touching me for a few dollars. One even came into my office so drunk he laid down on the floor to sleep it off. Another came to my room at the Dyckman Hotel, at 3 o'clock Sunday morning, hatless, and with torn clothing, saying he had just stuck up a guy in an alley and in the fight he had got knocked out. I let him sleep and gave him a new hat in the morning with ten dollars to leave town.

But this was cheap stuff compared with the man on

parole, who daily came to my office to tell me of a wonderful chance to make \$1,000 by buying and reselling some diamonds, owned by a lady who lived in Chicago. As I had business calling me to that city, I took this chap down with me, paying his expenses. He took me to several jewelers who spoke well of him. The diamond owner's name was in the city directory. In the morning I was to see her and the diamonds; also the purchaser, on the re-sale. That night I went down to the saloon owned by Jack Johnson, former world's champion heavyweight, had a few drinks and woke up the next morning in a cheap hotel, cleaned out. Even my shoes were gone. It seems my old convict friend could not resist the temptation to dope me and clean me out of over \$250.

Having friends in Chicago, I borrowed twenty-five dollars and got a job with the Chicago Tribune circulation department. I thought a month in Chicago would restore my bank balance, as I knew I was overdrawn at the Hennepin County Trust and Savings Bank in Minneapolis. But it's easy to plan. I worked hard and at the end of thirty days had \$150 due me—enough to meet all pressing obligations in Minneapolis. But, the eternal feminine equation intervened, resulting in smashing all my future plans.

Constantly seeing a young lady of more than average beauty dining every evening in the Grant Hotel Cafe, a most demure, modest-appearing young lady, I struck up an acquaintance with her. She was an artist's model, previously a pony in a famous ballet, extremely worldly wise, cynical and non-trusting. She posed as a woman of the world—a veritable firebrand.

A Hard Luck Tale

ONE night, she told me that a physical examination had disclosed that she had tuberculosis of the lungs. The verdict was that she had six months to live. Certainly this was a most embarrassing situation. Her head on my shoulder, sobbing in a heart-broken fashion, she then asked me to do her just one favor before she died—to get her some poison so she would die at once. If not, she would jump off the viaduct to the Illinois Central tracks below. Giving her one hundred dollars, I finally made her see that she must go home to the little Missouri town, which she had left to search for fame and glory, ever the dream of the stage-struck country maid. I bought her railroad ticket and Pullman berth and took her to the station. I never saw nor heard from her again. She was, I know, a good girl—just a victim of the lure of the city and bright lights of the stage. My recompense was in the thought that some dear old mother's heart was gladdened by the return of the little girl.

Sick of Chicago, I settled my hotel bill, leaving me a balance of two dollars, and jumped the train for the Twin Cities. Ditched at Red Wing by a railroad "bull," I rode into Minneapolis on a blind baggage, plumb broke. My breakfast was a bottle of milk and some doughnuts I pinched from a bakery door. A little thing like being flat broke in a large city never upset me, but my clothes were ruined. It would be necessary for me to get a new front before I could present myself before my financial and social acquaintances.

I went to the vestibule of an apartment house, and pulled out of the mail box a long envelope from the First National Bank, with a bank statement and

returned cancelled checks. The bank balance was small—\$56. I called the bookkeeper at the First National Bank on the telephone, saying: "This is the credit department, New England Furniture Company. Is a check for \$50 in our favor, drawn by —good?" Yes, it was O. K.

Trapped Once More

I HAD a supply of checks, and by taking advantage of bargain sales at Powers store, I was outfitted in first-class shape, with ten dollars cash in my pocket. At my old office in the Plymouth Building, I learned that the police had raided it and were looking for me. Hiring a room in a lodging house under an assumed name, I decided to quit Minneapolis next day forever. But, morning brought pressing need of ready cash. So I worked every good store, playing no favorites. I sold them my "short stories"—bogus checks—at figures from \$25 to \$50.

My pockets were bulging with greenbacks and I began to visualize a trip to Frisco and the coast. Wandering into Powers to the basement grocery department, I ordered a lot of choice articles sent to the Partridge residence on Lowry Hill. I sent in a check to the cashier in my favor from Mr. Partridge. This basement grocery is a cul-de-sac, and from the elevator stepped a dapper young man, who requested my presence in the office. Here the bookkeeper had a two month-old check of mine, marked "insufficient funds." I offered to take it up, but the young gentleman, whom I learned was a detective, suggested that the chief would like to see me. We walked along chatting, when, within a block of police headquarters, near a new building under construction, I gave my companion a quick, hard push, saying, as I drew a gun: "I'll put a slug into you." He quickly jumped to the top of a sand pile, while I dashed down the street, to the accompanying yells of the bricklayers and carpenters. Through an alley I dashed, under a four-horse coal team, through Rothschild's store and over past Hennepin Avenue, to a bar, where, in a shaded room, I cooled off with a stein of beer. Returning to the lodging house, I passed away the afternoon with the bootlegging landlady, playing cards.

Again the hand of Fate—or was it retribution? In came an ex-convict acquaintance, who was on parole—people I always avoided. In his hand was an Evening Journal, with my picture below the head line. He began the inevitable hard luck story, to touch me for a "sawbuck" (\$10).

Evading questions as to my plans, I got rid of him, packed up and went to another room I knew was vacant, locked the door, laid down on the bed and waited for midnight to come, when I intended to go out the window, drop to the kitchen, and go to St. Paul, where I would be safe among friends. Someone knocked on my door. Throwing it open, I saw the ex-convict whom I was trying to avoid and another whom I had known. "We came up to help you get away," both exclaimed in unison. What really happened was that the second man was a Pinkerton stool pigeon. I got to the street, and a block down came a rush of feet and six "dicks" from headquarters surrounded me. Each man had two guns leveled at me. Trapped again by stool pigeons to whom I had given money and befriended!

My case was quickly settled. I refunded all the

money taken by me on checks, pleaded guilty to forgery, and Judge Booth handed me a "five-spot" in Stillwater. Back again on my old job as bookkeeper for the Western Shoe Company.

Making a Break

THE contract between the State and the company having expired, on the completion of the new prison, I was paroled to the company as bookkeeper, having served just twenty months. I was thoroughly sick of crooked business and welcomed the chance to begin life anew with a clean slate.

My old friends came back to me and the future seemed bright with promise of better days. At last, I thought, I can accomplish my most cherished resolve to become an honest, respected citizen.

Nothing had been said to me by anyone concerning my salary, but when I received my first week's wages, I found it was \$13.84. Will some kind-hearted economist please come forward and tell me where the money was coming from to live an honest, decent life on? I now see that the proper course was a presentation of these facts to the State Board of Parole. But I knew that, had I adopted this method, my return to the prison would have been inevitable, where I would have been subject to the jeers and laughs of all the convicts as a failure—one who couldn't make good.

I was making good, so I determined to wait and see if time would not bring about an improved condition of affairs.

One Monday morning, as I was walking to the office, about six weeks since I began to try to exist on thirteen dollars a week, the galling injustice of the whole situation overwhelmed me, and without any premeditated plan I went to the railroad station and said, as I laid down my money: "Give me transportation as far as this will take me West."

Arriving at Omaha broke and angry, I went over to South Omaha, to a lawyer with whom I had been corresponding regarding an overdue account. Entering the law office, I said: "Good morning, Mr. ———, I am the treasurer of the Western Shoe Company, and am here to settle our claim against Mr. O'Leary. The lawyer gave me a courteous greeting. We went to Mr. O'Leary's shoe store, where a satisfactory adjustment of his account was made by me. This little affair netted me about fifty dollars. With this sum and some good bluffing, I reached Seattle, Washington, broke, as usual. A week of varied experiences, during which I acted the parts of porter and waiter, I drifted on to Tacoma, Portland, Sacramento, Oakland and, at last, Frisco.

My experiences in Frisco would fill a book, but after all, they are similar to thousands of others who are broke and down, but not out. In my distress, I wrote to Henry Ford, asking for any kind of employment. In my letter I gave full details of my twenty years in prison and how sick I was of the life that brought me to such a pass. I also wrote to many prominent ministers and heads of large companies. All were most courteous in listening to my pleas for some kind of work—but it all ended in promises. Not one, single person ever offered me a cent of real money to help me on my way.

On the wharf, one day, just before the Los Angeles boat was due to leave, a boat employee carelessly dropped a steamer trunk overboard. The trunk was almost ready to sink, when I leaped to the steamer's

rail, reached down and tied a rope to the handle, hauling it aboard. For this I was given the place of the unlucky employee.

I made one round trip. Scrubbing paint work, washing decks, and polishing brass rails, poor food and the vile sleeping quarters, combined with the small pay, made life a hell.

I then held a job as a chef's assistant, until I had saved sixty dollars. Then I partly paid and partly beat my way to Butte, Montana, where I worked as a mine laborer in the copper mines. It was a hard, stiff job, but the pay was good and the food at the miners' boarding house was all that any man could desire.

With this as a start, I finally worked myself into the mine clerk's office, where my accountant's experience proved valuable to me. No questions were asked.

Thus began my introduction to the mining industry which led me to the copper mines of the Southwest and Mexico. I reached a top-notch executive position, at \$3,500 a year and traveling expenses and here in the sunny Southwest, I also met *her*—the beautiful young lady to whose high ideals and perfect wisdom I owe all my happiness and whatever good there is in my soul. My most thrilling moment was, when, after the priest had pronounced us man and wife, I kissed my bride and started a home of my own.

Dark Moments

THERE may be many who condemn me for concealing from my wife and all my friends the fact that I was an ex-convict. It did not seem possible that ever again should I come in contact with persons or things having any relation to my dead past. But in March, 1920, like a flash out of a clear sky, I found myself to be one of thousands out of work, with no possible chance even to buy a job.

This latter fact I did not discover for several months. I had moved my family to Pasadena, California, comfortably installing them in a five-room bungalow. I, then, began the search for another position, well equipped with over a dozen letters of recommendation from well-known persons and companies. I made every city from San Francisco to New York. There was absolutely nothing doing in any line of work. In the Commodore Hotel in New York was my darkest moment. Sitting on the edge of my bed, with a 45-calibre automatic in my hand, I debated with myself what action I should take. My darling, devoted wife, I had kept in ignorance of the true state of affairs, as I wished to shield her and keep her happy and free from worry.

Never had I considered such an ending to my career. I must have sat on that bed for hours. The cowardly thought of deserting my family brought me to myself. It blasted the hopes and happiness, not only of myself, but of my wife and family, as its path led to the prison, where I am now writing this story, in an effort to provide funds to support my only friend, my loyal-hearted wife. There is nothing in this life equal to the love and devotion of a noble-hearted woman. Such is the one whose fate is intertwined with mine and whose faith, love and devotion spur me on to the long, lone, desperate battle for the chance to retrieve myself once more and win back the crown of good citizenship.

Having arrived at a decision to act along a certain line which would afford me temporary financial relief, I selected Rochester, N. Y., as being a centrally

located point, for my headquarters; rented a large room in a building on Exchange Street; furnished it with two kitchen tables and chairs, a typewriter and telephone. On the outside of the door I placed my sign, reading: "R. B. Johnson & Company, Printers and Engravers; Bank Outfits a Specialty." I was ready for business. Thus began an enterprise that provided me with an income averaging over \$5,000 a year. The risk of detection being small, the scheme having been so carefully worked out that, although a large detective organization was seeking me, at no time were any of them able to enmesh me in their skillfully-laid traps.

It was my intention to use this method of financing myself only so long as the business depression prevented me from securing a suitable position, with an income sufficiently large to maintain myself and family. Then, I intended to repay all from whom I had unlawfully taken money.

I began business with a capital, which was \$200 in cash, and a supply of cards bearing my firm name, letterheads and order blanks. Selecting the names of small printing concerns, I would say, over the phone: "This is Johnson Printing Company, Exchange Street, speaking. Our presses have broken down. Can you complete a rush order for us?" If the reply was satisfactory, I would take over the copy attached to our order blank, also the paper stock and assist in putting it up. In two or three hours I would have the completed job in my possession.

Victimizing Banks

IN THIS way I was able to have printed letterheads, bank deposit certificates, bank drafts and exact copies of genuine stocks and bonds. Converting these same bank drafts, certificates of deposit and stocks into hard cash was my occupation, in pursuit of which I traveled from coast to coast, and from Maine to Louisiana.

One of my original schemes, directed against banks, had the advantage of leaving everyone up in the air. Searching the "business opportunities" column of a large city newspaper, I would select an "ad" calling for a city, county, or a State representative and apply. After receiving the authority to represent the company, I would purchase a few samples and go to the most likely city, where I would engage a suite of rooms at the best hotel. With my samples I would call on the Secretary of the Chamber of Commerce. Into this official's receptive ear I would pour my elaborate plan to bring to his city a new factory, which would employ local help, who, in turn, would enrich the local merchants by spending the large wages paid my company.

Factory sites and building plans were discussed; also temporary quarters to begin manufacturing our products. Leaving this gentleman our company literature to peruse at his leisure, I next would interview the city editors, believing that "it pays to advertise." To them I also gave my plans, usually securing good reading notices. I would place a half column ad; also several for a local manager, salesmen and stenographers. My office rented and furnished on the installment credit plan—twenty-five dollars down—I hired a manager, sales and office force. The latter I kept busy on typewriters, pounding out a mailing list from the telephone books. The banks and department stores, having by this time read with probable pleas-

ure the reading notices in the newspapers, I would send the manager, some well-known local man, to the banks to open a temporary checking account in my name. This was done to prevent the bank officials from seeing me and to add to the confusion later on, when the expose came. Thereafter all my banking was done for me by my stenographer.

One day, just before closing, I put in a good-sized deposit, consisting of checks drawn in my favor from banks far enough away to preclude any returns of "no account" before five days. This I keep doing for a few days, and then, early Saturday morning, I send down another good-sized deposit. A few minutes before closing time my stenographer goes to the bank to draw the payroll. Being a local girl, the paying tellers will always throw out, without question, any amount less than \$500. I pay my office force their weekly salary in cash—the balance going into my pocket. Now comes the final clean up. About 3 p. m., everyone is out of the banks, so I begin to purchase merchandise from everyone willing to accept my checks, ordering the goods sent to my office, where I give a check in payment. A late train takes me away and by the following Monday morning I am a thousand miles away starting a similar game, but with a different article and a different company.

A One Day Scheme

USUALLY merchants deposit checks on Monday, and as my account shows a good balance, they are honored. My office runs along smoothly during the coming week, until the bank receives the "no account" returns from my various deposits. Then the checking up comes. The bank officials never saw me; the clerks who sold me merchandise were busy and I was one of many to whom they sold goods; the young lady stenographers can only remember I was most courteous and kind—a perfect gentleman and handy with boxes of candy and ice creams. It's all a whirl. In the end the bank charges the loss to their reserve account and tries to forget it.

The foregoing is a one-week stand—and was good for \$1,000 or more every time. My one-day schemes were less elaborate. I made out a route covering ten cities; prepared ten identifications on numerous letterheads and ten sets of cards, with everything printed thereon except the street address and telephone number. By noon I have rented an apartment; also an office, in which I install at once a stenographer. At the best hotel I mingle in the lobby with the elite, and being a good mixer, I get plenty of local color.

At 3:30, after the banks close, I start in to work the department stores and brokerage offices. My intimate knowledge of department store organization, combined with expert acquaintance of the banking and brokerage business, made it possible for me to pull off stunts that anyone else would have been arrested for at once. I know I am remembered in many different department stores as the party who was searching for his mother-in-law.

Walking through a department store, I am instantly able to detect the degree of efficiency prevailing. A hundred little things tell me all I want to know. I can easily pick out the salesgirl who is head of the stock. Approaching her, I politely raise my hat and inquire in my most courteous manner if she had seen my mother-in-law—a tall, thin, red-headed lady, weighing 350 pounds, with a hatchet in one hand and

an umbrella in the other. This usually brings a laugh. "You see," I continued, "my sisters always trade with you, and I dare not go home without a present for my adored mother-in-law. It's her birthday."

I purchase something for a few dollars, paying cash. Then comes the real reason for all the apparent comedy. My sisters and wife always do the shopping, but today a bridge party prevents. Hence the list, which I produce. Could I have the names of the best salesgirls in various departments. I could—and the rest is easy. It took ten minutes jollyng to get the friendship of the clerks, who will later take me to the cashier or credit manager, and say that I am an old customer, who is buying a refrigerator, a gas range and a baby rocker, or it may be a baby's bed—something having a household touch, which impresses the credit man, that I am a permanent resident. I offer a bank draft drawn in my favor, the amount sufficiently large to net me seventy-five or one hundred dollars cash over the amount of purchases. If identification is requested, I have my apartment lease, my office lease, the rent receipts, and always several letters on bank stationery vouching for my reliability. One look at the stuff I had to offer was sufficient, and with extended hand I was requested to "come again." Attention to details made all my operations safe and enabled me to "carry on" and ramble all over the country for two years.

Always On the Jump

I REMEMBER returning to my office in Cincinnati, and my typist saying a certain store called up and wanted to know my business. Then I remembered I had gotten one hundred dollars from them two hours before. Evidently their credit department had phoned to verify my office address. Had this address proved to be a false one, I would have been arrested inside of an hour.

Working from 3:30 to 5:30 p. m., I was able to pass six or seven drafts, netting me around four hundred dollars. By 6 o'clock, or as near to it as I can make the right train, I am in a Pullman for a five-hundred-mile jump to the next city. I reach in my bag and bring up the working papers bearing that city's name, having previously destroyed everything having the name used the day before. Names and printer's ink are accessible in unlimited quantities, provided one has the brains to use them in a clever manner.

I never worked longer than two weeks at one-day stands, nor longer than four weeks at two-weeks' stands, without turning to my home in Pasadena, to be with my family. These visits to my home were for periods of from one to three months, and I was always comparatively safe. By limiting the amounts involved to one hundred dollars or less, the loser had practically no incentive to spend money for my detection and arrest. All department stores and banks set aside on their books a reserve, to which account check or drain losses are charged. Another thing operating in my favor was the disinclination to reveal to the public the fact that they were so easily and cleverly swindled. No one enjoys being laughed at, and this applies to corporations as well as private persons.

I was getting tired of traveling from one end of the country to the other. It was also more and more difficult to find suitable places in which to work. Industrial conditions had not improved to the extent that I had anticipated. Trips to the Pacific Coast were

expensive, and I longed to settle down in peace with my devoted wife.

Back in Prison

I HAD saved some money and my family's comfort was safe for the immediate future. I had successfully taken care of them through the dark period of hard times, and in the happiness of my wife I felt well rewarded for all the risks I had gone through. I therefore packed my bag in my home in Pasadena for a trip to Rochester, N. Y., with a light heart, as I had determined to quit the game, buy a fruit ranch near Pasadena, and settle down to the life of a gentleman farmer, as soon as I had sufficient capital.

I should explain here that for five or six years I had been depending on cocaine to stimulate me and push my nervous system to work beyond its normal limits. Few know the true effects of cocaine; even medical men admit ignorance of its effects. It is easier to break off the cocaine habit than to stop using cigarettes.

Coming to New York I secured desk room in a broker's office on lower Wall Street, and, on account of my knowledge of copper and silver mining, I soon became financially interested in several good silver mines in Alaska. I left New York. Two days later, at midnight, the police surgeon in a Boston police station found me a raving maniac, suffering from an overdose of cocaine. The next morning I was informed a druggist had been killed—a stranger to me—and I was formally charged with his death. A Jewish grocery store dealer, near the drug store, testified at my trial that I came into his store and offered to sell him rubber bags and syringes, but I have no recollection of it—nor of the things I was accused of doing. All I know is that I am in the Massachusetts State Prison, under a life sentence.

This crushing fate has not thrown me off my mental balance, nor do I intend it shall. I am living and working for my devoted wife and family.

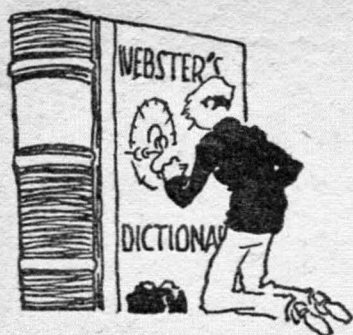
It is my intention, as soon as my wife and family are financially provided for, to repay, so far as I am able, everyone who suffered money loss through my operations. Nor have I forgotten nor omitted in my future plans to allot to her, who was so suddenly made a widow, such financial aid as I can give, provided she would accept it from me.

So a new life has been born within me. Literally, as Jesus proclaimed, I must be born again in order to obtain that complete success which my new life promises.

Expiation—Atonement—Punishment—The Future? "How oft shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him, till seven times?" Jesus said, in answer: "I say not unto thee, nor until seven times, but until seventy times seven."

The Founder of the Christian religion never had it in His heart to condemn a man because of his misdeeds. He was willing to forgive—a spirit which many of His present-day followers seem to ignore.

As a final word to young readers who have followed this story: Take warning from my career and the fate that befell me. You can't beat the game and stay out of prison. And take it from me, there is no compensation anywhere in this world for loss of personal liberty.



Underworld Lingo



THE racketeer and gangster of the underworld have evolved, in the past few years, hundreds of words and phrases which are used over and over again in the realm where terrorism, bribes, bullets, and bombs hold sway. To the outsider these words and phrases, colorful as they are, are as meaningless as Einstein's theory of Relativity, but to those that employ them in their daily lives, they are the tools by which they make themselves graphically understood. Below is a glossary of underworld terms used most frequently.

Alky—Alcohol; all kinds of spirituous liquors except beer.

Ape—A tough egg; a slugger.

Beat the Rap—To escape punishment.

Beer Flat—An apartment rented for the purpose of serving beer.

Bee—An advance in salary.

Below the Line—The worst cells of a jail.

Bindle Stiff—Smuggler of dope.

Blow Off—When the cops are tipped off to a crime.

Bop—A crack over the head with a blackjack.

Booster—Female shoplifter.

Bug—Electric burglar alarm.

Butterfly—A bum check that is being 'kited.'

Canary—Squealer.

Cannon—A revolver.

Can Maker—One who makes bombs.

Capper—One who aids in trimming a sucker.

Chopper—Machine gun.

Chiseler—A gangster who travels alone.

Crack—To talk.

Crate—A safe or safety deposit box.

Creeper—Sneak thief.

Dance—To die by hanging.

Dance Hall—The death cell.

Dummy—A detective or under cover man.

Dukie—Meal ticket.

Dynamite—A high-pressure salesman.

Educate—To terrorize.

Finger—To identify; as "to put the finger on."

Flame Chair—The hot spot or electric chair.

Fold Up—To quit a racket that's becoming dangerous.

Get a Load—To get an earful. A tip-off.

Gaff—A device that controls a gambling machine.

Gopher—Burglar who tunnels into a building to get his swag.

Graduate—A crook who has served out a jail sentence.

Grease Joint—Hamburger stand.

Grease Ball—A down-and-out racketeer.

Guzzled—Questioned by Headquarters.

Hacker—Knife thrower; razor expert.

Hitch—Jail sentence.

Hood—Ordinary hoodlum.

Hook—A pickpocket.

Hooker—A street walker.

Hot—An article that's just been stolen.

Hot Spot—The electric chair.

In the Racket—A carnival man.

Ice Box—Jail morgue.

Jigs—Negro help around a carnival.

Joker—A racketeer who is out of favor.

Jump—A tap on a telephone wire in order to listen in.

Jungle Buzzard—A tramp who steals from his pals.

Junker—A dope peddler.

Kicks—Shoes.

Kite—To pass a bum check.

Keystone—Small town lawyer.

Lam—To run away.

Lily—An easy victim.

Main Drag—The main business street of a city.

Mexican Stand-off—To kill in cold blood.

Mit Joint—Fortune teller's tent.

Muscle—To horn in on some racket.

Necktie—Hanging rope.

Needle—To put alky in near-beer.

Over the Fence—To sell to a "Fence."

On the Line—At once.

Persuader—A blackjack or billy.

Pie Wagon—Patrol wagon.

Pineapple—A bomb.

Pad Room—Waiting room.

Push Over—An easy job to handle.

Put the Heat On—Ready to shoot.

Roscoe—A gat.

Racket—Originally the carnival business.

Rumble—Exposure of a crime.

Sap—A blackjack.

Screw—A jail guard.

Scrub—To search a victim.

Shill—The come-on who plays a gambling device.

Slum—Worthless merchandise that has been stolen.

Snake—A pickpocket.

Sneezed—Questioned by third degree methods.

Stirbug—A mentally unbalanced crook.

Take for a Ride—To kidnap some crook and kill him.

Tip Over—To bomb.

Tommy Man—An operator of a Thompson machine gun.

Washed Up—Everything in shipshape.

Washed Out—Everything on the bum.

Wiggler—A pickpocket.

Yap—A country guy.

Yappi—A country girl in the big city.

The thrilling
conclusion of

The Hollywood

Hollywood's most sensational and baffling murder, long an impenetrable mystery, races its throbbing course to a thrilling climax. And Marie Whiting seems to establish herself as America's greatest woman detective in the unique devices she uses to trap the murderer.

THE STORY THUS FAP:

MARIE WHITING, sparkingly efficient manager of the *Chateau Fontaine*, most pretentious apartment house in Hollywood, is electrified into activity when her guest and closest friend, Janice Dailey, is found garroted in her apartment. The usual police methods, resulting in the arrest and confession of guilt of Jerry Dailey, Janice's ex-husband, leave Mrs. Whiting cold. Janice, a movie magazine fan writer, had been choked to death with a silken cord snatched from her bathrobe and even though the tasseled ends of the cord are found in Jerry's room, Marie is unconvinced. Detective Squibbs is satisfied but Marie isn't. She finds a mysterious man wearing whiskers has visited Jerry's apartment in his absence shortly after the murder. That same man shadows her. She suspects he has planted the bathrobe cord tassels in Jerry's room. She scoffs at Jerry for confessing and he becomes enraged when Marie suggests Janice had affairs with other men. Marie convinces the detectives Jerry may not be guilty and they take her wholeheartedly into the investigation as one of them. They question every resident of the *Chateau Fontaine*, most pointedly those who might have killed Janice to prevent her writing stories of their past lives. Suspicion darts from one to another. Detective Squibbs is bewildered. He is on the verge of arresting first one then another, then weakens. Marie bristles with activity. Her scintillating personality pervades the case. Her unique methods, almost circus stunts, leave the old detectives aghast and dumfounded. But their own resources exhausted, they follow her lead. Ruth fears the murderer will kill Marie, to end his pursuit, in the belief that with her out of the case it will be dropped as unsolvable. She pleads with Marie to no avail. Marie receives a warning message, threatening death. It is given to a bell boy in the hotel by a man wearing whiskers.

THE STORY GOES ON FROM HERE:

CHAPTER XI

I HAD thought that I would be excluded from the conference. I could see no excuse for my presence which she could offer the District Attorney or the actors and actresses. So I was surprised when she telephoned me.

"Come down as soon as you can and come in a dinner dress," were her terse instructions. I looked at her flame-colored evening gown in astonishment.

"This is what I wore to dinner. Another loan from Mrs. Charles. I told you, before, red is my most becoming color and I want to look my best because, alas, it is only when a woman looks her best that her wits work the fastest. Ruthie, I don't want you to let one of these people out of your line of vision. I have a suspicion that I will be left a second message of warning this evening and if one is left in this room I want you to see who leaves it. Understand?"

"But surely no one would be foolhardy enough to attempt that here?"

"My dear, if an actor did this job, he will be dramatic.



Squibbs dashed to the balcony with drawn gun. Flashing his light on the swinging figure, he fired twice!

He will complicate things according to the detective stories in which he or she has played important roles. In a story, the warning would be left here this evening in the most sensational fashion. For the hundredth time that day I murmured to myself, 'Clever Woman'."

The District Attorney, Chief Black and Detective Squibbs arrived fifteen minutes early.

"We've been talking this over, Mrs. Whiting," the Chief said after they were seated, "and although we are willing to go through with it the way you have planned it, we believe that Mrs. Conti is our woman. She probably visited Miss Crosby as a blind; gave her the thousand dollars and then came back to this house, went directly to Miss Dailey's apartment and demanded the story. When Miss Dailey refused to give it to her, undoubtedly, she insisted. By this time, Miss Dailey may have removed the strings from her bathrobe—my wife always does that, says they annoy her—and Mrs. Conti picked them up, choked the girl, wrote the story on the first actor she could think of to cover up traces of the other story and chose Jack James. It was probably an accident that he lived next door—"

"That is perfectly possible," Marie said seriously. "Personally, I would rather see the Conti theory work out than any we have advanced or any which may have crept into my mind at stray moments. But I wonder if a woman such as Mrs. Conti would know how to run a typewriter? Might it not be a good plan, tonight, to find out which ones do run typewriters?"

"By George, that's a good idea," the Chief slapped his thick knee. "What do you say McArthur?"

"If Mrs. Whiting says so, I say so." He had scarcely taken his eyes from her face since he had entered.

Murder Mystery

By
Ruth Biery



The officer's flashlight played steadily upon the form of movieland's darling, now unmasked as an arch murderer and incomparable villain.

"I have no typewriter; and I hate to borrow from our writers. I wonder—why not send up for Janice's?"

"A good idea." Squibbs jumped to his feet. This suggested action.

"The very typewriter on which the story was written. It will take nerve to try it out on that!"

"Was it your idea to let them know it was the same typewriter, Mrs. Whiting?" It was easy to see that the District Attorney had decided to leave the reins of the investigation in the hands of a woman.

"I don't see why not. There are certain types of people who react to the melodramatic more readily than to the common place," she answered. My mind registered the word 'actor'.

Squibbs had scarcely returned when Mrs. Whiting opened the door to admit Teresa Villa. Never had I seen the little Mexican spitfire looking more ravishing than on this evening. She, too, was all in red. She had thrown a huge red shawl from her shoulders as she entered. Now she wriggled with relief. "That damn thing weighs more than it cost; which is a fortune. You pardon me? But I must wiggle a bit so I feel more—what you say, comfortable? And how is you, my darling Mrs. Whiting?"

"I'm fine, Teresa, and now I want you to meet the District Attorney, Mr. McArthur; the Chief of Police, Mr. Black, Detective Squibbs and I believe you know Ruth?"

Teresa Brings a Comforter

"YES I knows her well; how are you, my darling? And now I wants to know if I can bring someone ins with me. He ees my boy friend who I love more

than anybody. If Teresa ees to be—how you call it—put in the jug—I wants that he ees with me. He ees just outside the door—.” She turned black eyes which could scarcely be resisted toward Mrs. Whiting.

“Why certainly, bring him in.” Marie started for the door but Teresa was ahead of her.

“You hear, my darling? You can come in? You can come in and take care of your baby.” She threw her arms around the tall boy’s neck and dragged him, to the middle of the room. “Thees es my Harrie, Mr. Deestict Attorney, Mr. Chief of the Poleecemen and Mr. Detective. Ees he not a wonderful person?”

If the tall, good looking, out-of-doors type of man was embarrassed, he did not show it. He merely said a general “good evening” and sat down. Teresa slipped into his lap. “You do not mind Mrs. Whiting? I am afraid of all thees policemen peoples.”

“Certainly not; this is your home, Teresa.—I take it for granted you are accustomed to the off-stage appearances of our actresses?” Marie’s eyes twinkled.

“Certainly; certainly,” replied the Chief without taking his eyes from Teresa. Not that I blamed him. She was a picture for any eyes as she sat, a ball of flame on the lap of one of our most popular young movie heroes.

Another knock at the door. A tall, regal looking woman, with soft brown hair clipped close to her head, entered. She was followed by a short, rotund and somewhat pompous person.

“You are Belle Mitchell,” Mrs. Whiting said, holding out her hand.

“And this is my husband, Mr. Driscoll. I hope you don’t mind.” There was no asking permission in the self-contained, a bit superior attitude of this superb creature.

“Certainly not; and I am Mrs. Whiting. I should like you to meet—” Marie again made the rounds of introduction. Miss Mitchell had on a white and gold sport suit.

“Aren’t you afraid, Miss Belle?” Teresa snuggled further into the arms of her Harrie.

“Not in the least. Why should I be?” Her smile would have frozen a less effervescent person than Teresa.

“I am; I’m scared to death. I had to bring my Harrie; but I see you brought your man, also.”

A Study in Contrasts

MISS MITCHELL turned toward the district attorney, leaving a gold-leaved shoulder exposed to Teresa. “I hope we will not be long, Mr. McArthur? We have another engagement.”

“Not longer than necessary,” was his rather rough and most ambiguous answer.

Tom Terry, Jack James and Dick Meade came in together. What a contrast! Tom, with his light hair and elaborate marcel, perfectly groomed, unworried; Jack James with his black, sleek hair, equally well groomed but lacking the nonchalant ease of Tom Terry; his brows were naturally heavy and tonight these were drawn together as though from worry, giving him almost a villainous appearance. Dick Meade, the extremely tall, lanky, loose-jointed director, impresario of some of our greatest talkies, did not give the impression of much grooming. I wondered, as I looked at him closely, why the women wasted so much time courting such a gawky, ungainly fellow. Yet he had as many hearts tied to his belt, as either of the two with him. Agnes Innes breezed in without waiting for the door to be opened.

“Hello, everybody. I suppose you’re the District Attorney,” she waltzed over to McArthur and held out her

hand. “Sorry, if I’m late. Let’s see, I know all the others except Miss Mitchell. Miss Mitchell, I am Agnes Innes. I’m really very charmed to see you as I have often sat in the last row and gasped at the screen’s greatest beauty.”

Miss Mitchell could do naught but be gracious; after all she was facing one of Broadway’s favorites. “Alas; I see I should have brought a boy friend along with me; you look real comfy, Teresa; but you see I haven’t been here long enough; I haven’t any.”

The entrance of Mr. and Mrs. Conti interrupted the general conversation. He looked haggard and she looked disdainful. She barely recognized the introductions. Their entrance seemed to mark the time for serious business. Not a word of conversation was uttered. The District Attorney straightened to attention.

The Inquisition is Launched

“LADIES and gentlemen,” McArthur’s speech had lost its usual self-assured staccato crispness. I wondered if he felt the same rather inferior attitude of most people in the presence of so much beauty and so much money—or power-to-make-money. “I have a rather unusual announcement to make. The Chief of Police and I are co-operating on this investigation. We have our own detectives working on the case, but in addition we have been most fortunate to discover a woman who knew the deceased intimately, knew her work and her personal friends. But we have played into an additional piece of luck since this woman is a trained detective; she rendered unusual service for her government, the United States, during the war. We have not only asked her aid but, in some ways, we are following her lead. I thought that since this—ah, company was unusually distinguished I would tell you this much about her. I will now turn this interrogation over to the woman of whom I speak, Mrs. Whiting, who has our wholehearted sanction.”

There was complete silence for a moment while all eyes turned and searched the face of Mrs. Whiting. She sat quietly and then said in a conversational tone, “First, I am going to ask you all to write on the typewriter on that little table over there. It is the typewriter on which we believe Janice Dailey was typing when she was murdered.”

I started. I half expected a general uprising. But Marie rose, took Teresa’s hand and said in the most friendly fashion, “Come, dear, let’s see what you can do on a typewriter.”

Teresa looked up, saw the friendliness in Marie’s eyes and immediately did as she was bid. She pecked with one finger. Mrs. Whiting stood where she could watch each writer. Mrs. Conti was the only one who did not seem, at least, to be a novice at it. She wrote off a sentence accurately. She wrote, “Yes, I can use a typewriter.” Dick Meade, Jack James, Tom Terry and Belle Mitchell showed that they had used typewriters occasionally.

“Now, I wonder if you’ll all write your names with pen and ink on this large sheet of paper, one under the other.”

I was surprised but I guessed immediately that Marie was going to try to trace her note of warning through hand writing analysis and comparison.

When we were seated, again, in our semi-circle, Marie said, still in the same conversational tone, “I believe you are entitled to an explanation. I thought it better to get the details over with first. (The details—such details of typewriting and writing before they were too nervous to be unnatural, if I knew my Marie as I thought I knew her).

“As you all know, Janice Dailey was murdered here

Monday. Her body was not discovered until yesterday morning. Her divorced husband was arrested but released by the police this afternoon." I was watching carefully as per my instructions but I could see no change of expression on any face except that of Teresa. She openly clapped her hands. "Oh, I'm so glad, I know Jerry would not kill anybody. I just love Jerry."

Marie paid her no attention. "She was writing stories which involved or was directly upon you people who are gathered here. (I noticed Jack James and Tom Terry's eyes glance at the Contis.) She was writing a fiction story which concerned Mr. and Mrs. Conti. Janice was a very old friend of Mr. Conti's."

"We wish each one of you to tell us if you knew she was going to write something which did not particularly appeal to you. Supposing you tell us first, Tom. We already know that you have an alibi which is unshakable."

Answer to Maiden's Prayer

"CERTAINLY! I'll be glad to start the ball rolling. Janice interviewed me Sunday. We went to Santa Barbara for the day. You know, we were—I had formed quite a habit of taking her places. In fact, I was very fond of the girl; her death has been a terrible blow to me. She was doing a story on why I have never married. I gave her more than I had ever given anybody else on the matter. Told her the truth, though, that I didn't believe that a screen sheik *should* marry."

"We have the personalities which our companies and our publicity and our pictures have built for us. Our one big chance is to hold on to those personalities; to give to the public what they want from us. I told Janice that the largest percentage of my fan mail comes from young girls and young women who are under the impression that they have fallen in love with me. My unmarried condition is even a greater asset today than it was yesterday. I pointed out that it is the one weapon I have to defeat the married men who are pouring in upon us. I more or less made myself the answer to the unmarried girl's dream."

"Did you tell her about any specific love affairs you had had?"

"She knew a lot about those, anyway; but I gave her permission to use them. I told her that my one big passion in life had been during my first year on the screen and since I couldn't win her—she's in the room now, so you'll pardon me if I don't make any further specific mention—(We instinctively looked at Belle Mitchell, whose husband was openly glowering) I had passed the one real temptation of my life to marry. She asked me the usual questions as to whether I preferred blondes or red heads or brunettes and I told her the truth, that I had trained my fancies to change with the seasons."

"Was there anything you gave her which you would have preferred not to have printed?"

"Not a thing, Mrs. Whiting. It is not the first time I've run around with writers and although I was fond of Janice I never once forgot, or allowed myself to forget, that she *was* a writer. It's dangerous to get chummy with a fan writer unless you hold your tongue even though they may be the most beautiful of women." I thought he looked at Jack James and Dick Meade a bit queerly as he made that last statement.

"So Miss Dailey knew nothing you would fear if you saw it in print?"

"I've answered that question once, Mrs. Whiting. My life is an open book; she could have nothing."

"Thank you, Tom. Now, Miss Mitchell, I believe you said you were in a hurry."

"Yes, I am." Her words were a bit higher pitched, her manner even more I-am-Belle Mitchell. "Miss Dailey was doing a story on me about fashions. She helped the photographer pose the pictures. I hope all that work is not to be lost!" She smiled; the smile was meant to lessen the harshness of that subtle comparison of her time to the life of the young girl who had, perhaps, wasted it. "We discussed nothing but fashions. As for an alibi, my husband and I go out infrequently in the evening. Director Clarence St. Johns and his wife played bridge with us until one thirty in the morning. Now, if I may be excused—" She rose. Every man in the room rose also, except Harrie, Teresa clinging more and more tenaciously to him.

"Certainly, Miss Mitchell," Marie got the husband's coat and hat. Again that almost-shameful feeling because we could not produce a butler! She swept from the room with her for-the-public smile indelibly impressed upon the memories of each one of us.

"Very well, Mr. James."

Jack James Near Raving

"MRS. Whiting, I am going to be frank with you; not because I want to be frank but because I am afraid not to be frank. They say the American police are thick witted; maybe not. I was raised in Europe." I smiled at his raised-in-Europe. Although he had managed to keep it from the press, Janice had told us just last week that he was in reality foreign.

"And in Europe we do not hide what we have from the police; we tell them at once or we take heavy consequences. Miss Dailey was writing a piece, a story, about me which I would have preferred not be printed. I have managed to keep my identity in Hollywood and in the films a secret. What my friend, Tom Terry's, unmarried state is to him my mysterious one is to me. I am the only mysterious leading man on the screen. There is Lon Chaney and there is Greta Garbo but there is only one Jack James. I have a name which is all American but I have an appearance, a manner, I might say, which is all foreign. Miss Dailey had been making some investigations; she had determined to write a story and call it 'Who is Jack James.' She had stopped some of my friends in the lobby and ask them about me—I do not like living where there are reporters, Mrs. Whiting, and as soon as this is over I will take a house and go where I and my friends cannot be interrupted."

"There are many of my friends foreign. One is what I call a friend but he has two faces; underneath he does not love me. (Undoubtedly he was more and more giving away his foreign extraction.) She invites him to her room; she gives him a few drinks. He says that perhaps I am a spy from Germany and have gone into the movies to hide my identity. Of course, that is ridiculous but to your Miss Dailey nothing which might mean a story is ridiculous. Now he started pacing the floor before us. "She came to me; I am stunned, I cannot talk; I do not know what to say to stop her from printing such foolish things and starting a lot of gossip about the mystery hero who never tells anything."

"If you say nothing, I will say that you refuse to comment and describe you as all burnt up about it," is what she tells me. "So you'd better talk, Jimmy, and let me tell the truth or have you deny it."—There she has me; I, who never give interviews to fan writers. What can I do? I, too, have had a few drinks with her; she is my friend. I do not wish to lose a friend; it is not good to lose as a friend in this city a girl who is a writer. So I talk. I tell of my early life in the old country; of my poor parents."

I say that I am not that spy but I give her much of my story. It is the first time I have spoken. I even tell of my loves to her; I am not careful like my friend, Terry. When I once get started after so many years of keeping my mouth quiet, I forget and I talk, I puff it all out like a steam engine. This is Saturday morning. All day Saturday and Saturday night; all day Sunday I brood on it. I do not leave my apartment. I could kick myself in several places. But it is done; I cannot undo it.

"Monday night I cannot sleep thinking about it. I know she has been out with my friend all day Sunday; maybe she has not yet written the story; maybe if I go to her and tell her how I have suffered, she will not write it. If I tell her that now with all these stage people coming, it is more important than ever that I keep myself one hundred per cent a mystery, she will take pity and write another story. In Hollywood, there are plenty of stories.

"So I get up out of bed and dress and go down to her apartment. I knock on the door; there is no answer. I knock twice; still there is no answer; I knock the third time—I cannot wake her so I go back to my room. I wake up my valet and have him mix me a drink; then I go back to bed. That is my story; I know it is not a good story to tell of the night when a girl is murdered but so help me God, I am afraid not to tell it."

"What time did you go down to her room?" The District Attorney demanded.

"Eleven forty five." All of us came to attention in a hurry. "Are you sure?" Marie demanded.

"I know, absolutely. When I had dressed I thought it might not be the right time to call upon a lady; so I look at my watch. It is eleven forty three. 'She is a young lady who stays up late and has much company, she will not be in bed yet,' I say to myself. It could not take me more than two minutes to get to her door.

"Why did you not tell this before?" asked the Chief of Police.

"Nobody asked me."

"And there was no sound in the room?"

"Not a thing and I laid my ear against the door and listened."

"That's all. Check up on the story of his valet immediately, Squibbs."

Teresa Accuses Mystery Hero

THE testimony of the others seemed tame after this startling revelation. Tom Terry had delivered Janice at Teresa's house Sunday evening in time for a late supper. Janice with Teresa and Harrie had discussed a story she was doing on them both. After midnight they had driven her home. Monday night, they had been at Teresa's beach house at a party.

"And to think I was singing my little Mexican songs for her the last time." Teresa cried and clung closer to Harrie. "She love so to hear me sing them. And you!" From tears to a tempest was only a half-second's transition for this volatile young woman. She stood in front of Jack James. "You say, not in words, but you say just the same you do not like her; you say she is not honest; you say she force you to tell a story. She is clever but she never force nobody to tell a story who doesn't need forcing. She knows all about us, doesn't she Harrie? (Harrie nodded) an' she never writes one word which is not good for us; when she write what is not good the people they deserve it. I hate you; I hate you; I hate you. I think you kill my Janice and I think I will kill you for it—"

She reached toward her stocking but her Harrie picked her up in his arms and carried her from the room, sobbing.

I do not doubt that there was more than one in the room who agreed with her accusation. Detective Squibbs, by the way, had slipped quietly out.

Dick Meade shrugged his shoulders. "I worked Monday night until midnight. You can check with the Goldstein Studios. My chauffeur drove me directly home. Miss Dailey had not yet done her interview with me; I did not even know she was to do it."

Mrs. Whiting nodded; it seemed to me, absently. She was watching Jack James intently.

"You may all go now," she said finally, "except Mrs. Conti. Mr. Conti you may wait in the hall for her. And I wonder if you gentleman would mind going into the lobby for just one moment. I wish to speak to Mrs. Conti in private. No, Ruthie, you may stay. I mean, I don't want any men present."

They went out. Only Tom Terry remembered to shake hands with the Chief of Police and the District Attorney.

"Now, Mrs. Conti," Marie drew the woman over on the couch between us, "I want you to tell us why you wanted that story and if you got the story. I do not think you committed this murder but you may be seriously implicated. I can help you if I know the whole story."

There was absolute silence for a few moments, then without unbending an inch, the woman answered: "I appreciate you more than you realize, Mrs. Whiting. I am a cold, hard woman but I was trained to be a cold, hard woman; if you knew my story you could better understand me but I have no intention of telling you. I wanted that story to hold as a club over my husband. He hates scandal. He comes from a proud, old family. He wants a divorce from me but he would rather live with me the rest of his life rather than have scandal touch the name of his children. He is a coward; he wants happiness but he is afraid to go after it. With the threat of disclosure, I believe he would let me get a divorce on my own terms and those terms would be practically all of his fortune. But in addition to that, I wanted to read that story. I wanted to know how she met my husband, what she thought about him."

"Thank you, Mrs. Conti, now you may join your husband."

"But I didn't commit murder to get it."

Marie made no answer.

Your Last Warning

AS Mrs. Conti went out the door, the bell boy came in and held out a note to Marie. "Wait," she ordered. She tore it open; handed it to me. It read; "This is your last warning."

"Where did you get this?"

"On the floor of the lobby. It was lying face down; I picked it up, noticed it was addressed to you and brought it right in."

"You have no idea who dropped it?"

"No."

"Who has passed through the lobby within the last ten minutes?"

"Just the folks who were in here with you and the housekeeper."

"You're sure that's all?"

"Absolutely."

"You may go and send back the two men waiting in the lobby."

Marie handed the note to the District Attorney. "Where did you get this?"

"It was just dropped in the lobby. Johnson brought it

to me. No one but those who were here and the housekeeper passed through that lobby."

"Then you think?"

"I think that the murderer of Janice Dailey was in this room tonight and by Saturday morning I will have the proof for you. This is Friday morning. By Saturday morning at eight o'clock I will tell you definitely who murdered Janice Dailey."

Both men looked a bit incredulous but they said nothing to suggest it. "You can have all the men you want—"

"I want three men stationed here at my command from this moment on. I want good strong men who move swiftly and who are also intelligent. Have them report to me here as soon as you can get them."

Squibbs telephoned the order. We said our goodnights and Marie and I were left alone in the apartment.

"Ruthie, I'm going to read until those men come. I must get myself relaxed. I'll read in the lobby. I'm not taking any risks. You run up and get to sleep. You and I are leaving at eight o'clock in the morning. We're going to visit every motion picture studio in this city."

CHAPTER XII

A Poser for the Suspect

HOWEVER, we did not leave at exactly eight o'clock the next morning. Marie called me at eight "Come on down to room 204 and see my new apartment."

"Two-o-four. Oh, Marie!"

I hurried down. Just why she wanted to move into *that* apartment when her own life was in danger—

"Thought I'd see if the theory that a criminal returns to the scene of his crime had anything to it. But perhaps, with a strong enough motive—Come in!"

Two men entered with Marie's futuristic book case between them. "Why, good morning Tom; good morning Mr. James. Did you think we were tearing down the house or something?"

"We didn't know what to think. Neither Jack or I felt much like sleep after that session last night. He dropped in for some highballs and I persuaded him to bunk with me. I didn't feel exactly like sleeping *next* to this room alone and Jack didn't feel like sleeping *above* it, so we threw our fears of spooks together. He even brought down his Jap to sleep with mine. How's that for men who are supposed to be strong and hearty?"

"Pretty bad, Tom; pretty bad. But you needn't worry anymore; I've moved in bag and baggage."

"Why do you do that, Mrs. Whiting? I should think you'd—I mean—"

"Oh, I'm not afraid of the dead, Tom. It's the living who trouble me."

"You're a brave woman, Mrs. Whiting!" Jack James made a grimace.

"Not brave, Mr. James, just ambitious. Well, you'll have to pardon us, gentlemen, but Ruth and I have a busy day. We're making the rounds of the Motion Picture Studios this morning."

"The studios!" They made the exclamation together. "But I thought you were sleuthing, my dear lady," Tom added.

"Not today. They've got enough detectives on this case. We can't do much anyway, until they've checked all the alibis."

"But why the studios?" James' voice was incredulous.

"Well, I haven't been in one since they started the talkies. Of course, it was really Lottie Yardley's idea. She's been wanting me to visit the studios for ages. So

when she called me last night and suggested it, I really couldn't resist it."

"Anyone going with you?" Tom Terry put this question.

"Not that I know of, although, of course, I may be shadowed. I have sort of a hunch that the District Attorney suspects me." She laughed gaily. "Isn't it funny? The minute you show a little interest in a murder you find yourself being suspected. Are you boys working today?"

"Neither one of us," James answered.

"Thought we might see you. Of course, there's another reason, boys, why I'm taking a day off. I don't exactly crave having the wind crushed out of me and I've already had two warnings."

"Warnings!" Again they both spoke together.

"Yes—oh, good morning, Mrs. Wilson. Did my moving awaken you, too? Come right in. We're talking about the eternal subject of 'Who murdered Janice Dailey?' I was just telling the boys that I've had two anonymous letters warning me to get out of this investigation. So for the day, at least, I'm going to heed those letters."

"I shouldn't think you'd want to move up here under those conditions, Mrs. Whiting," Mrs. Wilson shuddered. "I want to move just as soon as they'll let me."

"We'll get you another apartment as soon as the police are willing. As for moving up here; that's exactly why I did it. It would take a pretty cool person to murder a second woman in the same place where he murdered the first. Besides, I'm not leaving any bathrobe strings around handy."

"Well, you're welcome, but I feel exactly like Mrs. Wilson. I'd like another place, too, Mrs. Whiting, as soon as it's convenient." Tom Terry turned toward the door.

"Me, also, if you please," said James.

"O. K. boys. Come on Ruthie." We went out.

Marie Has a Vacation

NOT camouflaging this morning, Marie?" I said. "Not necessary, my dear, I want our little old man, if he's hanging around anywhere, to *know* I am vacationing in the studios."

We went to Horner Brothers, first; straight to the publicity department. They couldn't have been more charming.

They sent the assistant publicity director with us. "The power of the press," Marie whispered to me.

It was different than in the old days of silent pictures. Now the place looked like a factory. Little page boys running around in full dress regalia carrying messages from one important person to another.

We stopped at stage number one. "We'll have to wait. They're taking a talkie sequence. See the red light over the door? When that goes out, we can enter. You'll pardon me for reminding you, but you'll be careful not to talk, whisper, cough or sneeze, while they're taking a talking sequence, won't you?"

"I know; like a concert. I always want to cough or sneeze at the singer's most dramatic moment."

We whispered our gratitude for his instructions. Yet we exclaimed aloud the minute we were on the set. It was so beautiful, we couldn't help it. Struggling across sand were six covered wagons, drawn by twelve worn horses! In the background, a great curtain depicting deserts flanked by high mountains. This landscape was painted in the most delicate of colors. The wagons stood on real sand with what seemed to be actual cacti and desert flowers sprouting around them. I marvelled at their natural beauty.

"But why the flowers in their natural colors?" Marie whispered, echoing my own thought-question.

"This is an all-technicolor. Everything has to be exactly as it will be in the picture. With this new process every shade is shown.

There were girls and men standing around the wagons, their costumes as colorfully picturesque as the flowers and the back-ground of desert and mountains.

There was a buzz for a few moments followed by a click. Then a girl, who had climbed to the front seat of one of the foremost wagons, started singing. I doubt if I've ever heard a sweeter voice. She was one of the best of the light-opera singers from New York City.

The music stopped; a soft whirring noise—just a faint sound reminiscent of a desert wind, reached us. The desert sands twirled, the eddies grew bigger; the whirring noises grew louder.

"O. K." There was a click; the scene was over.

A man came over, whispered to our escort and departed.

They're going to run a playback for you. That's most unusual but we sent word out you were coming and to give you the works."

We followed him into a long, rectangular room.

"All right?" I judged it was the director speaking.

"Shoot." There was a buzzing noise, then a woman's voice singing; the voice we had heard from the front of the foremost wagon. It was followed by the chorus—the sounds of a soft wind on the desert. It was perfect.

"I'm interested in the mechanical end. It seems wonderful to me that they can imitate so many noises and make them sound absolutely realistic. Do you make them on the lot?" Marie asked.

"Most of them. Would you like to see the mechanical department? It's a little irregular but I guess in this case we can make an exception.

"I'm a bit tired, Marie. Do you mind if I sit down and wait for you?"

"Not at all, dear."

They were gone a long time. I thought, for anything so dry as noise devices. But then, Marie was mechanical. She was always designing new pieces of modernistic furniture.

"So you could reproduce almost any sound?" I heard Marie ask as they rounded the corner and came back to me. She was with a tall, spare man whom I took to be the manager of the department—as well as with the boy who had escorted us.

"Anything within reason. Bring me any sound you want reproduced and I'll make you an imitation which will fool the naked ear of the average person. I'll promise."

We went to three other studios but they were all on the same pattern. One moment we were in a snow scene and the next on the desert; again, we even saw an airplane crack-up on a vacant lot in Culver City.

"My dear, we're not fan writers; we're detectives." Marie explained as she dragged me away from stage four. "I'll bring you out again some day. Right now, we must hurry back. We have a movie of our own to finish."

She thanked our escort. As we started toward the entrance we met Jack James and Tom Terry.

"But I thought you didn't have to work?" Marie stopped to greet them.

"I was called over for wardrobe on my next picture. Tom came along with me."

"Did you have a good time and get the needed relaxation?" Tom queried.

"We've seen everything. It's wonderful."

"Are you going home, now? It's getting late."

"Yes; just leaving. Want to drive back with us?"

On the way back Marie graphically described our experiences of the day while the two boys laughed at our evident lack of comprehension at what was to them an every day occurrence.

We parted in the lobby. I went with Marie as far as the second floor on foot.

"I'll see you at dinner, dear," she said. "This day has been more profitable to a sleuth than you could possibly imagine!"

Again I wondered at the twinkle in her eye as she made this tantalizing hint at something which I could not understand. I'd never make a good detective, I decided as I rang for the elevator.

CHAPTER XIII

First Scene, Last Act

MARIE had told me that she would telephone when she was ready for dinner, that she might have a surprise for me. But, somehow, I couldn't wait. I had been siezed with a wild restlessness such as I hadn't had since those dear days long past when my husband was late coming home and I was sure in my own mind he had had an accident and lay in the hospital with some terrible injury. While I was dressing I had stopped a dozen times to dart to the windows, to run from my bedroom into my living room, to peep into the closets. I would not wait for her call; I would go immediately to her's—Janice's—apartment.

Nor did I knock. I opened the door and walked in contrary to my custom, I was so anxious about her.

"Well, Ruthie, you're getting disobedient. But she held out her hand with a smile. Four men were to one side of her; their backs before the windows. One was Squibbs; three I didn't know but judged they were detectives.

"Now you understand," she turned to the man. "You will be across the hall in apartment 203, which I managed to have vacated. At the sign of the least disturbance in here you are to take your places in the hall, you in the main hallway and you at the door of the secret staircase to stop anyone coming from either the Wilson's, Tom Terry's apartment or this one. Shoot if necessary but do not shoot to kill; shoot to stop. And you—" She laughed as she turned to the third man. "I'm afraid yours is not to be a pleasant night. You will get plenty of air behind those beds and the space, luckily is wide. But still you'll have to keep standing—"

"That's all right, Mrs. Whiting. Don't you worry about me. I just hope I get my eyes on the bugger."

Marie held up her hand as if in warning. "Don't stop him or her too soon! I want proof that this party intends to kill me. Otherwise, if it's someone I know—they might pretend they were worried about me and just paying me a visit. Let them get busy. Only—naturally, I have no desire to be a full-fledged martyr. And you," she turned to Mr. Squibbs, "are you still determined to get in on this?"

"I certainly am! I am going to stay right in that bathroom, armed to the teeth and ready for action. Personally, I don't think anyone's going to make any attack tonight but since you're so certain; if something does happen, I'm not going to be the one to miss it. Now, boys—" he turned to the three men. "You've heard Mrs. Whiting's instructions; listen to mine. I've got my whistle. I'll blow it when you boys are to take your places. And don't move from them! Pete here," nodding toward the man who was to stand behind the beds, "and I will take care of things here. We don't want any escapes. Mrs.

Whiting is risking her life to catch this guy and we've got to get him. She has told you to shoot to stop; I repeat that order but if he doesn't stop, shoot to get him. Do y' understand?"

"Yes, sir." They answered together.

"That's all, Mrs. Whiting—I'll go down and wait for the others—" He went out.

"You boys can go into that dressing room and wait until after we have gone down to dinner—then take your positions. It will be several moments. There's cigarettes and matches there. Help yourself." They departed, closing the dressing room door behind them.

"But, Marie, you don't think that anyone who is planning an attack upon you doesn't know about all these preparations? You don't think he'll act under such circumstances, do you?"

"The person who plans an attack upon me, if there is such a person, is in grave danger himself. Unless he acts tonight, tomorrow will be too late. I have no actual proof against him now but he isn't certain of that and by the time we go to bed, he will be less certain, if my plans carry. Those men are in danger, Ruth. Especially those who guard the hall. Don't make any mistakes about that. Well, how do you like my gown tonight, Ruthie?"

"It's gorgeous. Green's as becoming to you as red, Marie. But I can't understand. One would think you were preparing for a wedding rather than a second—murder. Why do you do it?"

"Perhaps it's the dramatic instinct in me coming out, my dear. Turning sleuthing into tea parties and dinner parties. For, Ruthie, you and I are entertaining at dinner tonight!"

Marie Gives Dinner Party

"ENTERTAINING at dinner!"

"Yes. And just think of the house gossip. Janice was one of my best friends and three nights after her body is discovered I am entertaining. I am dressed in a new evening gown in the dining room on the night before the arrival of her parents. Can't you just hear our dear tenants talking about me?"

"But why do you do it, Marie? I—well, I don't like it myself, to be honest. Surely you could arrive at whatever you seek without all this flagrant, cheap melodrama." When I am worried I am always in my nastiest temper.

"Sometimes it takes cheap melodrama. Maybe it's my imagination working overtime. Perhaps I am being cheap—and it may all come to naught in the end. I don't know, maybe I am a fool and a—"

"No you aren't, Marie; I'm sorry. You're wonderful; simply wonderful. Why, Marie, you've already saved one man from prison. Without you, Jerry would surely have gone to trial and you can never tell about trials. Even though you don't catch the real murderer you should be happy in the knowledge of what you have done for Jerry."

"That's all right, dear. I understand. Stand back of me, Ruthie," she petted my head, "I need you tonight. Don't desert me."

The district attorney, the chief of police and Squibbs waited for us in the lobby. "Hello, everybody!" Was this the Marie who only three moments before had seemed so contrite and discouraged. "We'll go right into dinner."

A large, round table had been reserved for us in the center of the dining room. At least, Marie had made certain that we were not to pass unnoticed! I looked at the other tables. How *did* word get around? Not even I had known we were to have such a distinguished group for dinner. And yet, here it was. Crowded! People stand-

ing in the hall waiting for tables. I remembered the night Lily Damita had brought the scion of the ex-Kaiser to dinner; it had been the same story. Everybody showed up just when they were dining. And the night that Mary Pickford was a guest there. Apartment house walls did have ears.

If Marie noticed, she paid not the slightest attention. "I was just telling Ruthie that undoubtedly you gentlemen were calling me very unpleasant names for turning a murder case into a tea party."

"Not at all, Mrs. Whiting." The district attorney's voice was earnest. "We are watching your tactics with intense interest but not with unkind criticism. I believe that our American police methods are altogether too routine. We do not use our—our imaginations. We expect our solid, thorough, matter-of-course procedure to outwit even a highly sensitized imagination. It can't be done."

"And there's something else, too, Mr. McArthur, which you overlook. You think that eventually you will get him so why do work today which can be left until tomorrow. You don't realize that every day a criminal is at bay there is less chance of catching him. My idea is not to use the usual police means at all. I don't care a rap about those alibis you're going to check over with me now. I might have the first day: but now it's too late for alibis. They, too, can be manufactured with time. For example, Teresa told you she was at her beach house until 2:30 Monday evening. Teresa was home in this apartment at 11:15 Monday evening."

"But I have the proof here; the word of eleven of her guests—"

"Certainly you have. They think she was at her own party until it was over. But the fact is that a lot of people went to the beach that night who were not invited. That is the usual custom with Hollywood parties. Teresa was not on speaking terms with one of her guests. Teresa is Mexican and when she fights—well, she hasn't learned, yet, like the rest of Hollywood, to forget it. So when this group came in she was furious. She told her Harrie she was going to put them out. He tried to stop her but she insisted. So he bundled her in the car and brought her home. Teresa was right here when that murder was committed. So much for alibis and regular routine followed by the police departments!"

"By that reasoning, these other alibis we have here may all be phoney." Chief Black drew a paper from his pocket and laid it upon the table.

Marie Sets the Stage

"OH, SOME of them are bound to be bona fide. But, frankly, I didn't ask you to dine here with me tonight to go over those alibis. I am merely playing out a little drama here, with you for the principal actors."

"A little drama. I don't understand." I thought that Squibbs' words had an edge of suspicion in them.

"But surely, all of life is one big drama, is it not? This murder was not the high spot of our drama; it was merely the beginning. The murderer thought his or her part was finished; I was determined to force him or her into the belief that it was only beginning. He meant to have Jerry hang for it. Then his part had only started. If Jerry had hung, his original idea would have been right. His work would have been over. But since Jerry is still alive and will join us and occupy that empty chair in our circle in a moment—Oh, don't you see?" She spread her hands upon the table in an appealing gesture. "Whoever committed that murder has been watching me every moment."

They know that I am the person who interrupted their plans and made the murder merely the *first act* rather than the final curtain of the play. But here were all the props. The cut strings; the silly door contraption; the forged first page of a manuscript. Didn't it have all the ear marks of a *play* to you?"

"I can't say it did," Squibbs mumbled.

"But it does now, Mrs. Whiting," commented the district attorney. "What act of the play is this, Mrs. Whiting?"

"The first scene of the last act," she answered promptly. "Can't you see that this, too, is a setting? Can't you see that the murderer *knows* we are sitting here together? Here I am, all dressed up like an actress ready for her big scene talking to you confidentially in low tones. I even had the other tables moved back a bit to leave a circle around us so we would stand out more prominently; also to prevent people from overhearing what we are saying." She smiled. "What are we saying? What am I telling you? Ah, that is the problem which is worrying the criminal. No matter how cool he may be—or she; no matter how sure of himself—or herself, he is cringing with suspense at this very moment.

"It's what you *don't* know in this world that hurts. The same psychology which makes children—and grown-ups afraid of the dark! What was I doing, gowned in a new red suit, at the studios yesterday? What was I doing at the Hotel Columbia yesterday morning?"

Nearing The End

"**A**ND what, oh, what, am I telling you now! You arrest a person and put them through the third degree. The third degree works only on morons or mentally sub-normal people, friends. But a game where he is kept guessing—Chief, the murderer whom I have been harassing these past few days must do something soon. He can't stand the strain much longer."

"But how—when—" It was the district attorney who asked this question.

"I don't know. If I did, I would be certain that I would be in this dining room eating breakfast tomorrow morning. As it is, I am not at all certain. But one thing, I know in some way these people must learn that I have *not* told you whom I suspect; that we have gone over the alibis and that I have promised to hand over the criminal to you by nine o'clock tomorrow morning or tell you my suspicions at that time, my reasons for them, and let you trace him or her down in your own way. See how my drama works? See how it draws its proper audience? There are the Contis just entering."

Squibbs gave a low whistle.

"Let me think. I left this second act to work itself out; I could not plan it ahead. Open that list, Chief; let's see what you have in your alibis. They all work out as stated, don't they?"

"Everyone; even Teresa's." I thought the Chief's voice was a bit bitter as he made this statement.

"Well, pretend they don't. Go over the list with me. Even though they *know* they didn't do it, our colorful drama (perhaps you know now why I asked you to wear Tuxedos?) has so baffled them, so intrigued them that they begin to ask themselves, 'Can it be that my alibi doesn't hold water?' Jerry will be here any moment. Then put the list away. I think that some one of that group will reach the end of their endurance and come over and ask us how we are progressing. That will break the ice and all of them will come over. A lot of people who aren't in on it but can't withhold their curiosity longer

may come also. If one of the principals doesn't make the break I have a disinterested party in the room who will. But I want our drama to work. I want their unrest to force them to it!"

The Spectre at the Feast

WE WENT over the list carefully, each one playing his part slowly, deliberately, as directed. We were going over the last alibi when Jerry entered. He, too, was in Tuxedo. "Sorry, folks. Terribly sorry to be late but a fool cop held me up and said I was the guy wanted in the fan writer murder. Chief, did you put him up to that?"

Jerry had spoken so every person in the room could hear him. The chief shook his head in a ponderous manner. "No, Dailey, I can't understand that."

Marie beckoned to the waitress. "Bring Mr. Dailey his soup—why, hello, Teresa. I wondered if you weren't going to come over and kiss me." Marie held up her mouth. Teresa was noted for kissing anyone she loved whenever or wherever she saw them. "Hello, Harrie."

Harrie pulled up two chairs; Teresa sat down. She did not look her usual, peppy self, somehow. She started to cry; softly, quietly, not in her usual gusts of unrestrained emotion. "Meesus Whiting—I have lied to you about where I was Monday night. I would not tell now only I know you find out. Nobody can keep anything from you long, Meeses Whiting. I did not stay at my own party, Monday; I came home. Harrie bring me—"

"I know, dear; we all know. Now forget all about it. You don't even have to tell us about it."

"You know?—"

"I know even the names of the guests who came uninvited, Teresa—Oh, how do you do, Miss Innes? Won't you join us? Yes, we are discussing the murder. Have been discussing it all evening. Draw up a chair, Mr. Squibbs." I thought it was a good thing Marie *had* arranged to have an extra space around our table.

"Just wanted to know how our lady detective was getting along." Miss Innes squeezed in next to the district attorney. "I suppose when this case is finished and the murderer safely lodged in San Quentin we'll be losing the world's most unusual landlady to the district attorney's office."

"If I have my way, you will," McArthur answered promptly.

Marie laughed. "Why join the district attorney? I get more excitement right here as a little old boarding housekeeper. Well, Tom and Jack and Dick, I was just going to send over for you if you hadn't joined us. And the Contis. Tom, I think you know them all. Will you ask them to join us? I'm about to reveal the status of this case as seen through the eyes of an amateur detective."

When we were all there, the ladies seated—Jack James, Tom Terry and Dick Meade standing behind Marie. Marie raised her voice a trifle. Scarcely a person had left the dining room, all eyes were centered upon our table.

"You don't mind if the rest hear, do you, Chief? I thought my little old man might be lurking around outside somewhere. You know, I've had the dearest little old man turning up in the most unexpected places; dropping notes for me, etc.

"All I have to say, friends," Marie's voice became serious. "I have some definite suspicions. And by tomorrow, as soon as I can get a check from an insane asylum in the East, I believe I will be able to put my hands on the murderer or murderers of Janice Dailey. Now you know exactly as much as the police know. We've checked up every

alibi but we're not going to reveal which ones are a bit shakey until tomorrow morning. And that, ladies and gentlemen, is all I have to tell you."

"Oh, I say, Mrs. Whiting, that isn't very much. You only make us more excited. I'm sure I won't be able to sleep all night," Agnes Innes pouted.

"Well, that's foolish. I expect to sleep like a baby," Marie answered.

"It doesn't seem as if I could stay in this damned place another night," Dick Meade's voice was surly. "I haven't slept since they discovered that body. I'm going to lose my mind if this kind of thing"—he swept his hand around the table, "keeps up. It's more like one of my pictures than real life." I saw Marie glance at the district attorney.

Marie seemed to think for a moment and then said cheerily, "Well, why don't you go to your cottage at the beach? Go down and get a good night's sleep! And you, too, Teresa. Have Harrie take you and your maid down to Malibou?"

"Does that go for all of us?" Jack James' voice was eager. "I've either got to sleep over that room or bunk with Tom beside it. I'd like a chance for a little sleep."

"Certainly, that goes for all of you. My telegram probably won't be here until morning. Only don't go further than Malibou or Long Beach. Those who haven't cabins can go to a hotel. Only, report back here at my apartment—it's 204 now, Janice's old one—by noon tomorrow. Not so far as La Jolla, Mrs. Conti." I thought Marie looked at her a little severely. "That's all right with you, isn't it, Chief?"

"I suppose so; yes, of course." It was quite evident it wasn't all right; but what could he do about it?

There was a general scramble.

We were alone once more. "Well, I must run along," Marie's tone was breezy. "You'll pardon me, but you know I do run an apartment house." Marie made her exit. I was too stunned to move. To let them all go like that without one word to the district attorney or the chief of police!

"Well, I'll be sawed and quartered!" The chief looked blankly at the district attorney.

"My God, what a woman!" was McArthur's only comment.

"Gentlemen," my voice quavered. "I—I—I'm frightened tonight. I'm not only afraid for Marie but I'm afraid for myself. I've been with her every moment. She's got three men. I—I haven't any. I wonder if it would be asking too much if you put a couple in my room—in the closet."

The district attorney answered readily enough, "Why certainly. We should have thought of that. It is only natural that the—er—criminal should suppose you know all that Mrs. Whiting does. We'll send someone up at once. Squibbs, attend to it immediately."

"Thank you. Thank you so much. My apartment is 616." I left them sitting together.

CHAPTER XIV

The Trap is Set

I DID not go directly to my apartment; I went to the housekeeper's room and inveigled her out of a pass key, made her promise that she would tell Marie nothing about it until morning. I knew I wanted a pass key so I could get into Marie's apartment at any moment.

I had only been in my apartment a few moments when Squibbs brought two good-sized policemen,

"They're pretty big fellows and they're heavily armed. In which closet do you want them?"

I had the feeling he was laughing at me.

"I just want them here in my living room. I'll leave the door open into my bedroom and if I need them, I'll call. Thank you, Mr. Squibbs."

"I'm going now to see Mrs. Whiting. Don't let anyone enter." With that foolish admonition I left.

Marie was sitting at her desk writing; checking up the accounts of the Fontaine. She looked up absently, "Oh, hello, darling. Sit down; I'll be with you in just a moment."

When she did finally swing around I was really disgusted. She sat there in pink nightie and negligee. "Just how you can sit there adding up figures when you know someone may be waiting to take your life—"

"Now, Ruthie. The world has to go on, you know, murders or no murders. If something should happen to me, I'd surely want my accounts to balance. Why are you down here? You should be in bed and sound asleep, Ruthie."

"In bed and asleep with you down here waiting for someone to try and kill you?"

"Well, I certainly hope so."

"But, Marie, why tonight?"

"Because I have said that tomorrow morning I will tell my suspicions. And the person or persons I have in mind are more afraid of what I will tell than they are of being caught at a second murder. Either one means death—at least in one sense. But if they can get rid of me tonight before I open my mouth and if they can provide a perfect alibi as to their location when this new murder happened—ten to one they'll get away with it and never be suspected. No, Ruthie, if I were in their place I would take a chance on committing one more murder."

"But, Marie, they must know you're guarded."

"They must suspect it. Yes. And that's the only thing that worries me. If they run the risk of bringing in reinforcements and manage to overcome my two outside men—but there's still my trusty behind the bed and Squibbs—he's the best man of the three, of course, Ruthie—I don't see how they could get into this apartment through the ceiling. Maybe I should have posted a man upstairs. Often, when you take the most precautions, it's fate that steps in and drops the final curtain."

"Marie, please, please come up and sleep with me." I persisted. In fact, I became hysterical. I could see Janice Dailey's slim form lying on that bed in its thin georgette coverings. I could see Marie Whiting's lying in the same position. I burst out crying. "Please, Marie; please come with me—"

"Stop that at once; stop it. A fine lot of help you are to me, Ruthie. Do you think your weeping and wailing is doing any good? I'm going to bed and I'd like to get some sleep. There, I'm in bed. Now, get up off that couch, stop your sniffing, use your common sense, kiss me goodnight and go up and go to sleep."

What else was there for me to do? She was in bed with her eyes closed.

"Shall I leave the light on?" I asked weakly.

"Certainly not. Put it out. Goodnight, Ruthie," and gave me a hug and a kiss.

Shots Crash in the Silence

I WALKED slowly to the elevator. How peaceful, how silent were the soft rugged hallways of our fashionable Chateau Fontaine; yet what sinister forces walked along them this evening. It was eleven thirty. Was that a

pistol shot? Probably only a backfire. I must get myself together.

I went in quietly. My men were smoking. All I could think of was Marie lying in the bed were Janice Dailey had been slain.

I knew that such terrible dread did sometimes come from the imagination but again it came from a distinct psychic sense of impending danger. Was this psychic or was it natural fear under such unusual conditions? My mind played upon things in the past; things which I thought I had long since forgotten.

"I'm going to bed!" I jumped up suddenly. "I'm going to bed. I'll open the door. If I need you, I'll call."

I undressed with feverish haste. If I could get into bed with the covers over me, perhaps then, I would get over this insanity through which I was passing.

I do not know when I fell to sleep. I awakened, sitting straight up in bed. Perspiration was running from my cheeks; my forehead.

"Something's happened; something's wrong." I didn't stop to analyze this time; stop to reason. I jumped from bed, grabbed for my dressing gown. As my feet touched the floor, a shot rang out; followed almost immediately by another. The shots came from directly beneath me. I rushed into the living room. My two body-guards were sleeping. "Quick, wake up!" I shook them. "Come with me; something's happened downstairs. There were shots—two of them."

They were awake now and in the hallway beside me. I rushed down the stairway in my bare feet, my cumbersome bodyguard behind me. It was an enclosed stairway. On the landing of the second floor I stopped. "Here, you," I grabbed the arm of the officer nearest me. "When I open this door you shut it and stand in front of it. If anyone comes out of any door into the hall, stop him. No matter who he is; whether you know him or not; stop him. If you have to shoot, shoot. But don't shoot to kill; shoot to stop him." I used Marie's words. "You come with me." I grabbed the arm of the other man. "Come on." We stepped into the hall. My extra man had not been necessary. I saw at a glance that Marie's two extra detectives from apartment 203 were on duty. I turned the knob of Marie's door. It did not open. I slipped my pass key into the lock. The door opened. I rushed in. The bed was empty.

Hollywood Murderer Unmasked

MARIE! Marie!" I called wildly. There was no answer. I rushed through the wide open windows onto the balcony. The windows to Mrs. Wilson's apartment were ajar; I heard a voice say. "The doctor will be in immediately." I dashed through these windows.

Marie was lying on the couch. An officer was stretched on the floor, not far from her.

Squibbs and Mrs. Wilson bent over Marie; Mr. Wilson bent over the figure on the floor.

"Thank God; look after her. I have business to do down stairs. The fellow may crawl away," said Squibbs.

"What's happened," I took one of Marie's wrists and started rubbing it.

"I don't know." Mrs. Wilson also was crying. "We were sound asleep when I heard a loud whistle. While I was slipping into my dressing gown and waking Mr. Wilson there was a shot; followed almost immediately by another."

"I know; I know; I heard them. Where did they come from?"

"The balcony. By this time I'd gotten to the balcony window. My husband yelled not to open it, but I did. And there was that Detective Squibbs dragging Mrs.

Whiting by her feet out onto the balcony. He said she'd been gassed. We carried her in here; I told the man on the switchboard to get a doctor up here quick while Mr. Wilson helped Squibbs carry in this other fellow. She's breathing a little better."

As if to prove this statement Marie opened her eyes, slowly, blinked and asked weakly, "Where am I? What's happened?"

"You've been gassed," I said gently.

"Gassed! Gassed!" She raised herself slightly. "Help me up, Ruthie. Help me up. Please, do as I tell you. Can't you see he'll escape? We've got to stop him."

I did as she requested. With what seemed an almost superhuman effort, she jumped unsteadily to her feet. "My God. If he's gotten away—" She staggered into the hall. Squibbs was coming down from the elevator. Two men walked behind him, carrying a groaning man between them.

"My God, Mrs. Whiting," Squibbs rushed to us, slipped a hand under her arm. "You must go back."

"Did you get him?"

"We got your old man with the beard, going over the balcony."

"Let me see him."

Without a word he led her into her own apartment, or rather Janice's, for to me it will always be Janice's, where the two detectives had carried their burden.

"I'll admit I was robbing that apartment but I can't see why all the shooting? The old fellow was whining while he nursed his leg on the bed Marie had vacated.

The whine seemed to snap Marie out of her faint.

"Playing the game out to the end, aren't you? Well, fortunately, I'm not that far gone." She shook off Squibb's arm and walked across to the couch, leaned over, yanked off the old man's beard, grabbed his cap; tore off the wig beneath it. "You'll have to take off your own false nose. I might hurt you. Make-up doesn't go with my profession. Folks, allow me to introduce Tom Terry, the murderer of Janice Dailey—" Marie promptly and completely fainted!

We carried her back to Mrs. Wilson's apartment. We left the three officers to escort the actor to his prison hospital.

The doctor worked for fully half an hour before he gave us the verdict.

"She'll live, all right." He said finally. "But she must have absolute quiet. I should suggest that you leave her right here for the present. It was carbon monoxide gas and she's evidently been under some strong mental excitement recently. As for this man—" He walked over to the form of the officer. Another doctor had been summoned and was working on him. They whispered together. "It's very doubtful. We'll take him to the hospital. He has one chance in a hundred. His lungs—he must have been in a corner or—"

"Behind the bed, doctor. Trapped behind the bed. Have everything done for them." I spoke the words I knew Marie would have spoken. It was only a few minutes before the ambulance arrived to remove the man who had probably sacrificed his life in trying to protect Marie's.

I sat by her bedside until morning.

CHAPTER XV

Marie Decorates Squibbs

NOW, I don't like post mortems to detective stories, but I have promised Marie Whiting I would write this exactly as it happened. When Tom Terry was dis-

closed to us as the murderer none of us knew any more than you do as to why he should have killed Janice Dailey. I tried to reason it out many times during that week which followed when I scarcely left Marie's bedside. We all wondered why a man making four thousand dollars a week should risk his position by murdering a fan writer?

Once or twice Marie asked a question. The doctor had forbidden her to talk. But one day, when the nurse was out to luncheon, she whispered, "Ruthie, they've got him safe, haven't they?"

"Absolutely, Marie. He has a bad leg; blood poisoning. They may have to amputate to save his life."

"Amputate to save his life, so they can hang him." She gave one of her low, familiar chuckles, turned over and went to sleep.

It was her sixth day in bed when she sat up unexpectedly. "Put some pillows behind me, nurse." When the nurse remonstrated she said, "You heard me ask for pillows, I believe."

I laughed. Our old Marie was back with us.

"Now, nurse, you're a good soul and I like you. But don't interfere with what I am doing. I'm equal to a good row this morning." The nurse said nothing.

"Ruthie, I want to pick up the threads. First, has Tom Terry confessed to the murder?"

"Yes, Marie. He has signed a written confession but this is all he said." I got the newspapers which I had been keeping for her. We were still in the Wilson apartment.

I read it slowly, "I, Tom Terry, of my own free will and being in sound mind, confess to the murder of Janice Dailey and the attempted murder of Mrs. Marie Whiting." That's absolutely the only thing he will say about it. He refused to tell when he killed Janice or to explain his alibi. Sylvia Haines and Al Dikes still insist to the reporters that they heard the typewriter going when they left that night. They grilled him as long as they dared in his present critical condition. The most he said was: 'Ask Marie Whiting; if she knows so much she can tell you all about it.'"

"Doesn't he know I'm ill?"

"Yes, they told him. His only answer was, 'Then wait until she is better. I can't very well escape from you.'"

"Poor Tom!" Marie sighed. "He's hoping against hope I won't give his motive. I might die you know. I'm afraid—Ruth, has there been a telegram for me?"

"Hundreds of them from all over the country. You're the Lindbergh of the moment. But the one you mean came as you expected."

"Saturday. What day is this?"

"Friday."

"Mercy; have I been here a week? Let me see it." She opened it; looked up and sighed again. "Too bad; too bad that once a bad actor always a bad actor. Well, Ruthie, where's the doctor? Tell him I want to see him immediately." He was there in ten minutes.

"Doctor, I want to give a tea party." Marie held out her hand to greet him.

"Sitting up. And who gave you permission?"

"Nobody; I don't need permission to use my own limbs, do I? Did you hear what I said?"

"About the tea party. Well, now, perhaps. Next week sometime."

"Next week—onions! I mean today. This afternoon. I want to entertain the district attorney, the chief of police and Detective Squibbs right here in this room."

They compromised on the next day, Saturday, just one week since her spectacular escape from death.

I telephoned these gentlemen the invitations. They could not repress their excitement. The district attorney even became confidential. "We've tried seven different

ways to figure this thing out; we even have wagers on our pet theories."

An hour before the time for their arrival Marie was sitting up in bed attired in her best pink silk, hand embroidered nightie and the new negligee which had come that morning with an enclosed card which read, "To a bully good fellow and one of us," signed by the Police Department.

She had disobeyed the doctor and had a beauty expert.

During that hour I read the newspaper's yarns. She gave me a merry-go-round for giving her pictures to the reporters.

Marie Belittles Her Triumph

"IT'S Squibbs that deserves all the credit. He's the one who saved me. I, who thought I was so smart, never even thought of gas! I might have known he'd realize I had detectives guarding me and not make a personal entrance. I knew there were gasses which could be projected through small spaces. Was it I who called the police dumb? Jumping Jimmie! But how did Squibbs discover it, if it had no odor. He was in the bath room. He couldn't smell it."

"Marie, I don't know. But I must say, he's been mighty modest about it. He's given you every bit of the credit; so has the chief of police and the district attorney. They've only issued one statement which gave them any credit at all."

"What was it? Let me see it."

In a lengthy statement all the credit they claimed was in allowing Marie free reign in solving the mystery. Her work was praised without stint.

"It's signed, Marie, by the chief of police and the district attorney."

"They shouldn't have done it; they shouldn't have done it. A hidden detective should remain hidden. But I don't suppose that's really possible. The reporters in this town are hounds for the sensational. We're in the world's most sensational city, Ruth. No, my dear, too many people knew about my work in this case to keep me out of it. But I'm sorry, really sorry. I had hoped to remain unknown."

Our three men now came in fairly bubbling with curiosity which had been given an entire week to expand. When they had drawn chairs close to the bed and completed their good wishes, the district attorney said, "Now for the story!"

"But before I begin mine, I want yours, Detective Squibbs. I notice by the papers that you give me all of the credit while in reality it should go to you. The last thing I remember was lying in bed wondering whether Tom Terry would be fool enough to try and murder me under the conditions. Wouldn't he suspect that I was fully protected? I'd let them all go so that he could register at some hotel and assure himself of an alibi. I knew he was a master at make-up and could go out easily enough without anyone in the hotel knowing that Tom Terry had passed through the lobby or was missing from his room. But, even with an alibi, I wondered if he'd really walk into the trap we'd set for him. I never thought of gas. I'd thought of the door, of course, and had a special bolt put on from my side so he couldn't possibly come in through it. I had purposely not placed a detective on the balcony or in the halls so that he would think the coast was clear. But wouldn't he suspect a man in the room?"

"He did," Marie laughed. I thought her laugh a bit bitter. "He kept right up with me; he thought of the men

and then proceeded to outwit me. And the next thing I recall, after wondering about his suspicions on the bed, was coming to in Mrs. Wilson's apartment. What happened, Detective? Why didn't you give it to the newspapers?"

Squibbs looked at the chief and the district attorney. The chief cleared his throat. "The three of us talked that over, Mrs. Whiting, and we decided if it hadn't been for you we'd never have caught our man. Never! We haven't figured out, even yet, how you did it. You risked your life to catch him. Nearly lost it, for that matter. Under those conditions, we agreed, at Squibbs' suggestion, that it was best to leave him out of it. We made our statement which protects us, in fact gives us a unique place in police history in this country. I guess you've read it—" Marie nodded. "And you don't begrudge it."

"Begrudge it!" Tears were on Marie's cheeks; she held out her hand to Squibbs who bent in perfect imitation of Jack James and kissed it. We all laughed. That relieved the sick-room tension. The district attorney lit a cigar. "Shoot your story, Squibbs. I'm anxious to get to Mrs. Whiting's."

"I was sitting in the bathroom reading the paper. The door to the bathroom was almost closed, too, but not quite. Thank God for that. It was two-thirty. I folded up my magazine. I was thinking something would have to happen soon when I felt a tightness across the forehead, a slight headache. Now that isn't like me; I'm not subject to headaches. I brushed my hand across my head. As I did this my temples started throbbing—like a flash, it dawned on me then, 'Gas!' I've made a study of them. I knew there were some which I couldn't smell. I knew that one per cent of carbon monoxide would kill her in from two to fifteen minutes. This all came upon me at once. I threw open the bathroom window and rushed from that place as I never rushed in my life. As I came out I blew my whistle several times, the signal to the detectives in 203 to get on duty in the halls. I noticed, at a glance, that Marie, here, I mean Mrs. Whiting—" he blushed and Marie said, "Oh, call me, Marie, Mr. Squibbs, I like it."

Tracing Slayer's Trail

"**T**HANK you. I saw she was already overcome. I threw open the three windows. Just as I was bending over her, I heard a slight noise on the balcony. I drew my gun and dashed for the balcony. I flashed my light and noticed a rope tied to the balustrade. I looked over. He was just hitting the ground. I fired. Lucky shots, both of them. The first one went into his thigh but the second hit right in the back of the knee. He fell and I was pretty sure he couldn't get far enough away so we couldn't find him. But, if he could I'd have done just what I did over again. I carried her out. The Wilsons had heard the shots and opened their place to us. Then I remembered poor Billows. Mr. Wilson and I went back for him. When this lady came down," he nodded at me, "I took my men and went down front. He was just where he was when I shot him, whimpering like a baby."

"As for you blaming yourself, Mrs.—Marie, for not thinking of that gas, I'm the one who should have thought of it. But I had no idea you suspected Tom Terry. Just how did you happen to get a line on him anyway? Of course, we know he was the little old man, now. We know he was the one that said he was a detective and went into the Hotel Columbia. We know he'd had years of training on make-up in this acting business and was a past master."

"Oh, yes, we know something else, too. He registered at the Sea Crest in Long Beach. He refused to go with Jack James to Santa Monica saying he was dead tired and had to study. He went to his room and even sent for some cigarettes so the bell boy would see him in bed. No one saw him go out, of course. He went as a middle aged man with iron grey hair. We found that disguise in his automobile. He let his chauffeur go for the night and his Jap, too. He'd evidently left his car down a side street not far from the hotel. He got into it as a middle aged man with grey hair and he got out of it a little old man with a beard. He left his car down White Ledge St. around the curve, and walked through those bushes around the basement entrance. He climbed up the secret stairs into the hall. He figured you wouldn't have any detectives in plain view, probably. But knew they'd be in the room with you. Only he didn't count on me in the bathroom or that gas creeping under the door to give me a headache and warn me. He knew none of us could smell it. Seeing nobody in the hall he entered his own apartment. He'd planned to go out the same way, probably, and, he would have, too, if it hadn't been for my whistle. I have an idea he was then almost through with his stuff and ready to leave. He left the hollow needle right under the door there. Funny, neither of us thought of that door and how easy it would be to put gas beneath it. He started for the door when he heard my whistle but heard my man running for his place at the secret staircase. But he'd planned a second escape."

"He figured if an alarm was raised and he couldn't get out the way he came in, we'd all be too excited to notice the balcony. He had a rope ready. He tied it over the balcony when I ran back to you. If he'd shot he thought he'd bring my men and they'd have been sure to catch him. But that little noise—if he'd escaped he'd have gone right back to the hotel and no one would have been the wiser. He'd been safe—"

"Safe from the law, Mr. Squibbs, but not safe," Marie broke in. "Why do you suppose he went to all of that trouble to murder one girl and try to murder another? My story's rather long but I'll tell it as briefly as possible." Marie straightened among her pillows. Her color was an unnatural red—I hoped she would hurry.

"I didn't suspect Tom at first, particularly, although I didn't like his talking to the officer on duty that first morning—finding out when the murder was committed. But from very nearly the first I suspected an actor or actress or somebody who had a dramatic imagination. I knew in my heart that Jerry didn't do it. Ten to one, then, it was somebody who lived in the house; who knew to a certainty when Jerry had been calling. That would have made me suspect Terry if it hadn't been for his alibi."

"But *dead girls don't typewrite*, Mr. Detective. And long before you checked it, I checked with Al Dykes and found Tom did stay with him all night. His story was exactly as he told it. They did hear the typewriter or what they thought was a typewriter. I turned my mind to others. Mrs. Conti. I telegraphed New York and found she had once been an actress. That was when I most mistrusted her. But even so, my instincts wouldn't accept her. Jack James, yes. I have never liked that fellow. Then there was the missing story. Janice would not be writing a fan story on Mrs. Conti. Surely she would not commit murder for a fiction story. Besides, she appealed to me as cold, hard, ruthless but honest. When she wrote on the typewriter, 'Yes, I can typewrite,' I *knew* she was honest, disdainfully honest."

The Tip-off on Terry

"IT WAS Jerry who really tipped me off that it was Tom Terry. I knew Jerry had a suspicion. He wouldn't tell me outright but he recalled to me a girl who lived with us last winter," Marie stopped.

"This is the part of the story that Tom hopes I won't tell you. He knows he has to swing but he hopes he can swing with the sympathy of the flappers of this country going with him. Well, he can't. I won't allow a lot of maudlin sympathy to go to the grave with that kind of a man. If you don't give it to the newspapers, I will." Marie's lips closed in a thin line.

"Tom Terry was not only one of the screen's greatest lovers but one of the country's. He made love to this girl and to that and then dropped them. You know his winsome personality. He was a heart-breaker. But last year he broke one heart too many. He was on location in Oregon. He met the daughter of one of their wealthiest families. He paid her unusual, even for him, unusual attention. The girl's father took a hand. He went to his lawyer, who warned the father to exercise patience. He traced Terry's record; hired the best private detectives of this country. And what they turned up! Whew! In addition to a record in a reform school as a boy and a few other minor details, they discovered that he had a wife in an eastern insane asylum, put there on his testimony, incidentally. Perhaps you now understand my reference to a telegram from an insane asylum the other night. When they had all of this record, the father and lawyer invited Tom Terry to dinner when the girl was not present. Her two older brothers were there. They laid their data before him and the father said, 'If you ever attempt to see or go near my daughter again I will give this information to the newspapers.'

"Naturally Tom made no more advances. But the father and lawyer had not taken the girl into consideration. She was really in love with Terry. She finally sold her jewels and came to Los Angeles where she rented an apartment from me. She telephoned him; she got into the studio where he was working. He didn't recognize her. Told people she was just another fool admirer. Finally, one night, she tried to commit suicide.

"I wired her father. He brought the papers down with him and showed them to her. She was insane with hurt pride and a broken love. Her one thought was to get even. 'I'll write my memoirs and put all this in them. I'll show him up for what he is, going around the country making love to every pretty girl, with a wife in the insane asylum.'

"Janice had been a friend of this girl's. The girl was in a terrible state and I thought it was to comfort her that Janice said, 'Leave that to me. Give me the evidence and I will take care of it. Writing is my business.' Janice never referred to it again and I thought she didn't mean it.

"How Tom knew that Janice had this information, I don't know. In interviewing him on why he never married, she may have tipped her hand. Perhaps she left part of the story lying around her apartment. Her windows onto the balcony were always open. I think he scoured the apartment for that evidence after he had killed her; that's the reason it was so tidy.

"Jerry knew she was writing that story. He admitted it to me that evening. Jerry, who hates newspapers be-

yond anything else since his matrimonial troubles have come from Janice's devotion to writing, didn't want her name mixed up with a man like Tom Terry. She had, undoubtedly, let Terry come through those windows before. Jerry knew how the papers would play that part up. He knew, as I do, that Tom Terry was always dangerously charming. Women more heartproof than Janice had fallen. When he said, 'Remember the girl who—' I knew.

Collapse of the Alibi

"HIS alibi. How was I to shake that? Everything fitted. We knew from the first that the murderer must have gone out one of those apartments. Only he hadn't gone out; he came from it. Oh, it was so simple. It was ten-thirty, perhaps ten-twenty. He stepped through the balcony windows. The strings of her robe dangled at her feet. He drew them up playfully. A twist of the wrist and he had them tightly around her neck. Tighter—tighter. Can't you see him looking around, then, for evidence to plant on Jerry? He had probably intended to shoot her and plant the gun but he couldn't overlook this chance that fate placed in his hands.

"It was the work of a second to draw out his knife, cut the ends of the cord, slip them into his pocket. He laid her on the bed, straightened out her nightgown. Then he sat down and wrote a story on Jack James. He had thought far enough ahead to learn about her assignments. Only he forgot that she was a poor typist; while he is almost letter perfect. When he had finished he looked around for more evidence to put suspicion on someone outside—not in a nearby apartment. His dramatic sense insisted he do something further! The door! He fastened the night bolt; fastened the string to it. No sense to it at all. Just an insane desire to complicate matters and a hope that he would make the police think the murderer went out of that door. Back in his apartment via the balcony, he turned on his alibi—"

"But what was that? How did you discover it?" The district attorney's cigar had gone out; we all sat in rapt attention.

"My trip to the studios. My relaxation. It was a sound device from the talkies. I visited the head mechanic at Horners. He told me he could make a device that would imitate a typewriter perfectly. An electrically operated one that would fit in a candy box and fasten in an electric light socket. You know the wall bed closet in Tom's apartment. Undoubtedly, he placed it in there under cover. After he returned to his apartment he turned it on. His callers heard that 'damned typewriter.' Then he went to a friend's for the night. Remember, he went back to get his cigarettes. It was really to turn off his imitation typewriter noise device.

"But, to prove all this—don't you see I didn't have a shred of proof? I had to force him to try another murder. I had to make him believe I knew all about it. His sense of the dramatic instigated those notes of warning."

The district attorney arose. His voice was serious. "I think we can fill in the spaces; you are tired; you have been very ill; you must rest now. We will come back another day and talk it over in further detail. You have certainly done us an inestimable service—"

The district attorney took her hand and kissed it. This time nobody smiled.

THE CLUE CLUB

SO MANY requests have come in from our readers to continue the Clue Club that we have revived it again with this issue. We will print a crime problem each month until all amateur detectives have had their fill. For the benefit of new members to the Clue Club a word of explanation is perhaps necessary. These crime problems while simple enough, have been worked out so that they become a test of your powers of observation and deduction, but provide, too, a means for enjoyment. Read the problem over carefully, study it and then write down your solution. Then turn to the correct solution in the back of the magazine and compare it with what you have deduced.

The Evidence on the Japanned Box

THE theft of the celebrated Elgin Emerald occurred under circumstances most embarrassing to Mr. Stephen Lorian, owner of the unique gem. Lorian had been entertaining a house party on his Long Island estate near Westbury. The guests were five in number:

Mr. and Mrs. Archibald Hay, their niece, Charlotte Granger, Colonel Alexander Blue, U. S. A., and Mrs. Eleanor Standish, widow of one of Lorian's classmates at Harvard.

With what he himself later characterized as inexcusable carelessness, Lorian, the host, had left the emerald in a small black japanned box upon a table in the living room after exhibiting it to the assembled guests one evening. He had been trying for some time to get through a telephone call to Paris, and when finally summoned to the telephone in an adjacent room absent-mindedly laid the box on the table and hurried out. When he returned in five minutes, the box was empty.

Assuming that the party was playing a joke on him, Lorian, in mock-serious tones, demanded that the thief step forward. For several minutes he could hardly believe his senses when each of the company, with the utmost emphasis, denied any knowledge of the missing jewel. Judson, the butler, had been in the room during Lorian's absence, as had Ada Gowan, a maid, but these old servants of good character also denied all knowledge of the matter.

For two hours the entire household was in the throes of an excited search on the theory that the jewel had been accidentally lost. But at last Lorian was compelled to face the truth: *someone had taken it.*

To call in the police on so obviously an "inside job" was revolting to Lorian's nature. Absolving everyone from

blame in the matter except himself, and insisting that he must have spilled it from the box, he forbade further discussion of the subject, and with remarkable *sang-froid* swept his guests into a game of bridge. It would "turn up," said Lorian.

Afterward, in his own room, with the japanned box before him, Lorian, who is something of an amateur detective, examined the box carefully.

Its surface was highly polished. On the outer rim of the inside of the cover he discovered a remarkably clear thumbprint, which he believed was not his own. He sprinkled it with the white powder used to bring out fingerprints on black surfaces and found it another's. Then he set the box carefully aside.

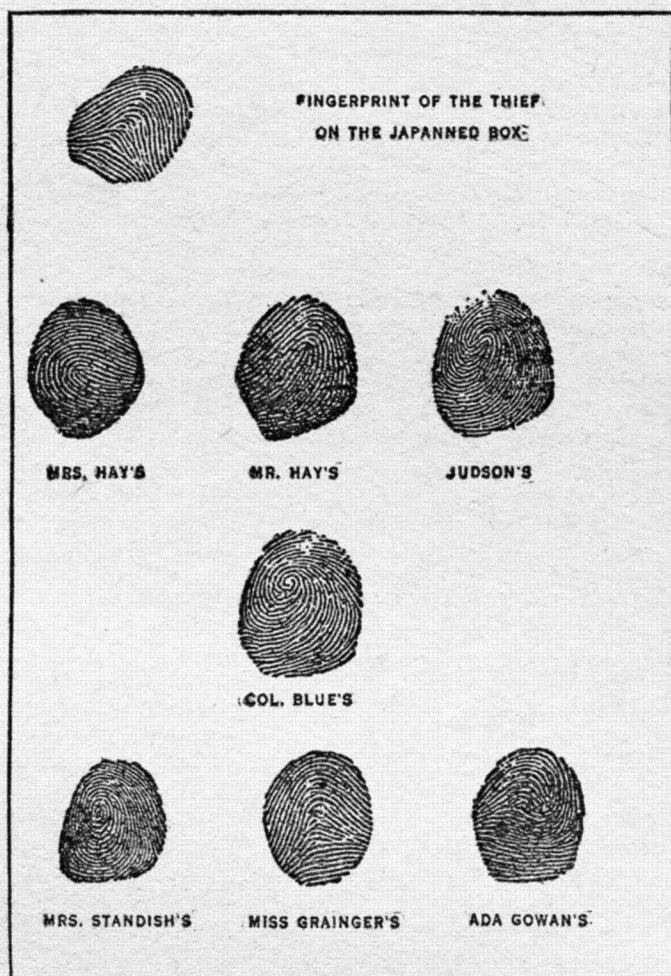
Lorian knew that none of the company had laid hands on the inside when he had first showed it to them. He reasoned (and subsequent events justified his reasoning) that this must be the thumbprint of the thief. But whose thumbprint? The innocent ones must not suffer suspicion. He resorted to a stratagem.

Lorian put the japanned box carefully away in a wall safe. He then took from his Oriental collection a nest of small black lacquered boxes, whose surfaces were even more tell-tale than the jewel case. The following morning, Lorian contrived to exhibit to each guest and each

servant a different one of the lacquered boxes.

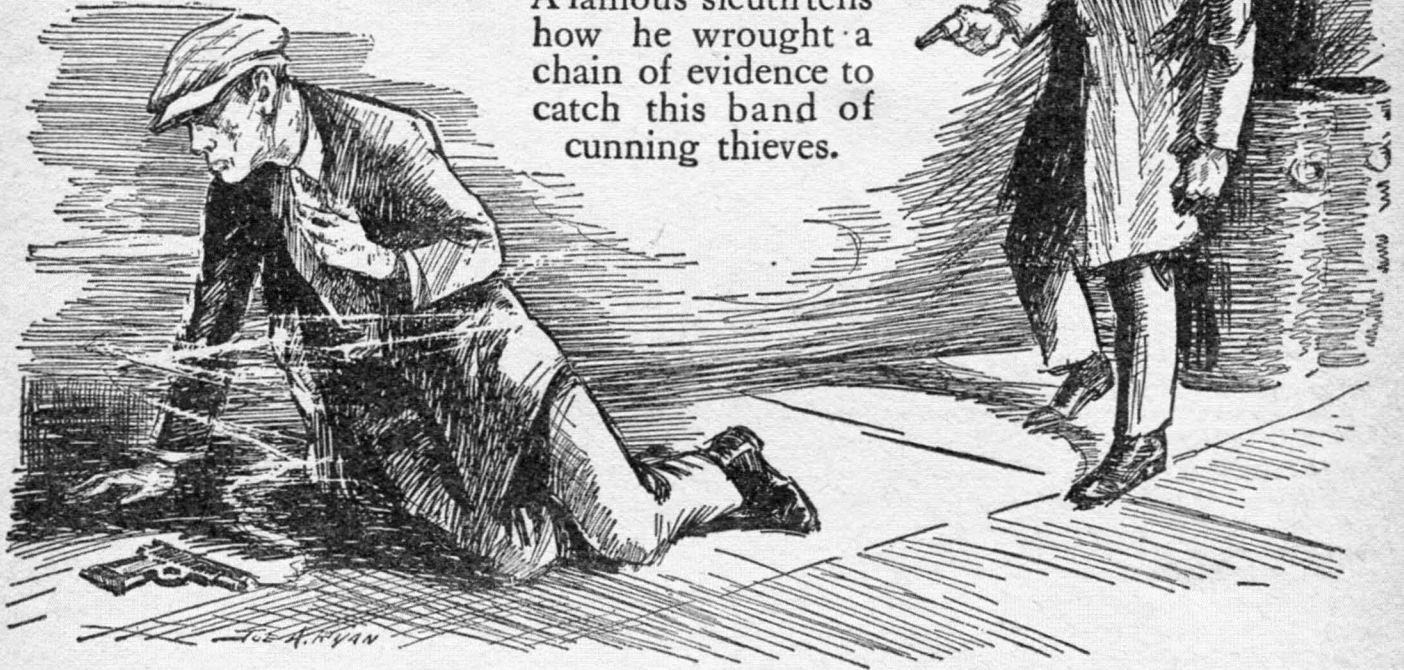
Each box, bearing a different thumbmark, Lorian duly secreted in his bureau. When this was done he withdrew to his room and treated the seven small lacquered boxes with white powder. Each, of course, he had subsequently labelled for purposes of identification.

(See solution on page 96)



Trapping the Lenox Burglars

A famous sleuth tells
how he wrought a
chain of evidence to
catch this band of
cunning thieves.



In the running fight that ensued, Fitzpatrick was killed by the police.

By **George S. Dougherty**
Former Deputy Police Commissioner, New York City

IN THE EARLY nineties of the last century burglary of private residences was a favorite criminal occupation which developed some wonderfully bold and clever crooks. Nowadays the attention of such persons has turned more to the holding up of bank messengers and cashiers, but this is a day of quick and easy methods! When some of the old-timers, reposing quietly behind bars at Dannemora and Weathersfield, hear of the "swag" cleaned up by a single successful operation of the modern "auto bandit," they must groan aloud with envy. In their day, the successful criminal was frequently a specialist who made a lifelong study of his "profession," and he ran repeated and tremendous risks for the sake of a comparatively meager gain.

The burglar who enters a private dwelling at dead of night is taking a frightful chance, and the men who followed this line of work were of necessity among the most daring and desperate to be found in the criminal world. They carried their lives in their hands every time they forced an entrance. One hears it said that a burglar "won't put his neck in a halter if he can help it," but neither will he permit himself to be captured, and where he is surprised on a job he does not hesitate to shoot to kill.

As district superintendent of the Pinkerton service I was consulted in connection with a particularly bold and successful series of crimes of this character. Country places in the aristocratic Lenox and Stockbridge region, owned by persons of wealth and social distinction, among whom were Hon. Joseph Choate and Mrs. Cyrus Field, had been burglarized within a comparatively short time of one another and a large amount of loot had been carried off. The men who committed these crimes were not satisfied merely to cruise the ground floor of a dwelling and to collect the family silver and ornamental knick-knacks; they boldly entered the bedrooms and forced the occupants to get up and hand over their jewelry and valuables of every description.

This sort of thing had been going on for some six weeks, with the marauders growing ever bolder and bolder. The local authorities were utterly powerless to furnish adequate protection, with the result that those of the wealthy residents who did not close their homes and depart turned them into veritable armed camps. The countryside was in such a state of terror that it was unsafe to approach even an humble farm house after dark. The innocent wayfarer was more likely than not to be greeted by a salvo of buck-

shot fired "on a chance" from an attic window.

But still, the gang—if one gang was responsible for this reign of terror—plied its lucrative occupation unchecked.

Extreme audacity was the key to the gang's success. The crooks were a cool lot, with nerves of steel, and never permitted themselves to be stampeded into a false move. They dropped in on a householder, ordered him to "produce," took what they wanted, and departed. Their appearance and manner were so terrifying that they were not obliged even to employ minor forms of violence, such as beating and black-jacking.

The region covered by these crimes was a fairly wide one—this was before the days of automobiles, it must be remembered—but all had such a distinctive and characteristic tone that when I started to make an investigation I soon came to the conclusion that we had to deal with a single gang operating under the direction of an unusually able leader.

The Reverend Dr. Grosvenor's home had been the scene of the latest outrage at the time when I was called upon. I went immediately to Lenox and questioned the doctor and members of the household.

Both he and his sister had received personal calls from the intruders. The latter had parted with all her jewelry and the doctor had lost what cash he had at the moment in his house, and a gold watch that was a family heirloom.

A watch is one of the things most likely to turn up after a robbery, and it can be easily identified, so I lost no time getting a complete description of this one, including the maker's number and other identifying marks which the doctor, fortunately, was able to supply.

Getting on The Job

MY INVESTIGATION did not stop with the Grosvenor place. It soon became evident, however, that most of the victims had been too badly frightened by their experiences to carry away any clear impression of the burglars' appearance. Dr. Grosvenor and his sister were about the only ones who could give anything approaching a clear description. Even they were handicapped by the men's make-up and masks.

Nevertheless, they both had talked with the four burglars, and the information which they gave to the local police already had landed a certain Willard King in the custody of the law. King was hanging about Stockbridge without visible means of support at the time the burglar scare was at its height. He had tramped over from his home town somewhere on the Hudson, looking for work.

This had occurred before I took up the work. I looked up King's record and talked with him in the cell of the county jail, where he awaited trial; and I was at once convinced that he had nothing to do with the crimes.

At the same time the whole countryside was crying aloud for retribution, and it looked very much as if King would be the unlucky scapegoat. In spite of the weakness of the State's case in other respects, he probably would be convicted on the positive identification of Dr. Grosvenor and his sister. Boiled down to its essentials, this was based solely upon a similarity in height and build, and the fact that both Willard King and the masked burglar had heavy shocks of

black hair that had been chopped off square across the front.

I took the liberty to point out to the doctor that this was pretty slim evidence on which to swear away a man's liberty and reputation; but he became very indignant and challenged me to find the right man if King were not he. This I promised to do.

Through all the following weeks of tedious and often discouraging search the thought of this innocent man, whose exoneration depended upon my efforts alone, served me as a powerful stimulus to keep at it.

But this is getting ahead of the story.

Early in the morning of the Grosvenor burglary a team of horses and a wagon were stolen from a farm not far from Lenox. I went direct to this farm house. Here I found that the stolen team merely had been "swapped" for another; the men who took the farmer's team had driven there in another rig and they had left the latter behind. The purpose of this maneuver evidently was to secure fresh horses, and it was clear that the persons responsible for it were not traveling for their health. This was a lead in the right direction.

On the mantel-shelf in the parlor of the farm house my eye caught sight of a neatly tied up coil of gaudy silk ribbon. Examining these, I found them to be ribbons in which packages of Van Bibber cigars, a brand well known in those days, were done up by the makers.

"Where did these come from?" I asked.

"Why," said the good housewife, "come to think of it, I found those in the rig the robbers left in our orchard. Are they any good to you?"

At this I could not help chuckling, for I remembered how indignantly Dr. Grosvenor had exclaimed: "The rascals even made me hand over all my cigars—half a dozen packs of Van Bibbers!"

The farmer had so far made no effort to find his team. It was his idea that it would "turn up somewhere" sooner or later. That might do well enough for his purpose, but it would not do for mine. I explained the situation and we quickly organized a search over a thirty-mile radius.

We did what for those days was some pretty fast traveling and found the stolen team abandoned on the outskirts of Chatham, New York. The poor animals were in bad shape from hard driving. There were no souvenirs left behind this time.

Here our direct clues came to an end and imagination had to step in and take their place. It is no mere whim that leads the fugitive crook always to make for a big city. He well knows that the crowded metropolis is his safest hiding place. Accordingly, I felt safe in assuming that the purpose in driving to Chatham had been to take the train to the city.

A Hot Clue!

FROM the condition of the team, and the hour at which the robbers left Lenox, I judged they must have arrived in ample time to catch the eight o'clock morning train. But inquiries at the ticket office and around the station failed to disclose anything of interest, nor had any strangers been noticed about the streets of the town.

I was beginning to think these fellows more clever than I had previously given them credit for being when I saw something which sent me off on a new track. This was an humble hostelry of the "gin mill"

variety on the street bordering the railroad track, but on the side opposite to the station.

Had the bartender seen anything of four strangers about train time on the morning of the previous day?

Yes, he certainly had; and they were tough-looking customers, too. He was glad to see the last of them.

They came into the saloon quite a little while before the train was due and had a couple of drinks all around; then sat down and waited. There was no one else in the place at the time. They did not move even when the train came in, but waited until it was just starting to leave the station, and then dashed across the intervening space and boarded it on the side away from the platform.

This performance, and the men's appearance, gave the bartender an idea they might be escaping convicts, and he had made a mental note of how they looked. He gave me a pretty good description of each of the four.

Next day I rode to New York on the eight o'clock train and had a talk with the conductor. He remembered the men well—four cash fares from Chatham on the morning of the sixth. He was greatly interested to hear they were suspicious characters, because his idea had been that they were "dicks," that is, railway detectives employed by the company, to discover whether conductors were "knocking down" cash fares. He said that the four separated and each rode to the city in a different coach.

The conductor was the most useful person I had encountered thus far, for he was accustomed to remember people's faces and gave me an excellent description. One of the four men had a shock of hair just like that which had put Willard King behind the bars.

When this point was reached I felt that a pretty good start had been made; but that was all it was, for at the Grand Central Station the trail was utterly lost. Our suspects had disappeared in the maze of the great city just as they had intended to do, and there was nothing for it but take up the chase all over again from a different angle.

The running down of the Lenox burglars now entered its second phase. So complete was our knowledge of criminals and their activities and so close a watch did the agency maintain over the more notorious ones that it might almost be said we could tell a man's identity from the quality of his work. With such descriptions as I now possessed we congratulated ourselves that it would be a matter of hours only, or, at the most, days, before the men who had been terrorizing Western Massachusetts would be run to their lairs.

We went carefully over the various descriptions at the office and picked out a score of the well-known desperate criminals whose characteristics more or less fitted them. A number of these were eliminated at once as being in prison or out of the country. One or

two others were known to have "squared it" and to be living honestly in sections of the country far distant. This left eight or ten active criminals about whom we wanted further information.

Day by day the list of possibilities dwindled as the reports of "shadows" and inside information came in. One suspect after another was eliminated by information which proved beyond possibility of a doubt that he could not have been connected with the Lenox or Stockbridge crimes.

Finally, we were forced to confess that the men we wanted were not listed in the Pinkerton Who's Who.

Back in Lenox

WHEN this method failed it was determined that I should go back to Lenox and take up the investigation anew from that end. The only thing to do now was to scour the countryside and collect every possible scrap of information bearing in any way upon the burglaries, in the hope that out of the mass some relevant fact would crop up to point the way to a fresh line of pursuit.

Accordingly, I returned to Lenox prepared to conduct a long campaign. Only the persons whose premises I had gone over previously knew me for a detective, and as my further operation could be best conducted in secrecy I carefully avoided meeting these.

I put up at the hotel and let it be known that I was a drummer. Next I made a deal with the local delivery stable proprietor for the steady hire of a good, willing horse; and when he pressed me for information as to the use I intended to make of it, I said that I was a dealer in ornamental shade trees.

"But don't you carry no samples nor no catalogue?" the crafty hostler inquired. I can see him in my mind's eye—a short, stocky man with frizzled, grayish hair, a round, red face,

and the corners of his mouth perpetually stained with tobacco juice.

Just at that moment a farm wagon came down the main street carrying a large tree of some kind that was being transplanted.

"Certainly," I retorted. "There's one of my samples now. The rest will be along tomorrow in a string of box cars!"

The livery man saw the point and laughed till his face grew purple. But there was an amusing sequel to this incident. When I came to Lenox two or three months later with the right wrist of a certain criminal handcuffed to my left—I was bringing the man up for Dr. Grosvenor and his sister to have a look at—my old friend, the hostler, caught sight of me, and his jaw dropped.

"Well, well," said he when at last he could speak. "I never did take no stock in that yarn of yours about being a tree agent, but to think I've been a-hirin' out



In this fact story, George S. Dougherty tells how he finally rid the country of a gang that had been terrorizing eastern communities for months.

my best nag all this time to one of them gol-blasted crooks!"

With a good rig and *carte blanche* from the office to take all the time needed, I proceeded to comb the whole country for information that might possibly have a bearing on the burglaries. There was nothing exciting about this work, but many amusing incidents occurred. One old chap, I remember, became very much excited when I asked him if he had seen many hoboos on the road of late. "Hoboos, h—l!" he retorted; "there was a passel of burglars passed down this way no later'n last evening. Don't talk to me about hoboos!"

"Is that so?" I said, really interested. "How do you know they were burglars?"

"Why, there ain't no doubt about that," the old fellow replied; "they wuz all a-wearin' stove pipe hats just like those there confidence men I seen picters of in the paper oncet."

So many persons will remember all kinds of things they never saw when they know they are talking to a detective, that I found it best to remain incog. and rely upon casual conversation to draw out what they knew. Many a time I thought I was on the verge of some really important discovery, equal to that of the Van Bibber ribbons, but the trail always pinched out and left me as far as ever from the quarry. Every hobo and "bum" that passed through the country left a trail of suspicion behind him, all of which had to be run down and pigeon-holed before I could feel certain that no possible lead was left unexplored.

At last I came to the end of my tether. The weeks had been slipping by, no fresh burglaries had been committed, and the old trails had all grown dim. The few persons that had actually come in contact with marauders had by this time told their stories so many times that questioning them was like turning on a phonograph. In all this time no useful clue of any sort had been turned up.

Before giving up, however, I passed a long day in my room at the hotel going over my notes and checking up on every source of possible information.

Among the long list of persons interviewed was a little old Irish woman who lived alone in a neat little cottage in Stockbridge. It was commonly believed that she possessed a tidy sum of money which she kept concealed in her house. An attempt had been made to rob the old lady, but it was a fizzle. Common gossip attributed this single failure on the part of the burglars to her sharp tongue and ready Irish wit.

Strangely enough, however, neither I nor the local police had succeeded in getting much information from her. In spite of her obvious self-possession, she appeared to have seen and heard less than anyone as to whom had been in the gang.

A Final Effort

THE more I thought the matter over the more it seemed to me that I ought not to go away without finding out just what this old woman really knew, so I got the faithful nag and set out once more for Stockbridge.

She received me hospitably, but shut up like a clam as soon as I mentioned the reason for my visit.

"Sure'n 'tis nothin' at all they took from me," she said. "For why should I be worryin' me old head about the likes o' thim?" And not another word could I get out of her.

I felt certain now that the old lady could tell me something of interest if she only would. It was a battle of wits now with one of us trying to out-Blarney the other.

Evening came and still I made no sign of departing. The poor old lady began to show signs of distress.

"An' will you not be goin'?" she cried. "The likes of a big, strong lad like you to be tormentin' a poor old widow woman!" No wonder the burglars had left empty handed!

At last she realized all her coaxing was no use and gave in.

"Seein' 'tis yourself," she sighed, "I'll have to be tellin'—but I want no part in the matter at all. Sure 'tis a dreadful thing to be sendin' a man to prison, an' him as innocent as a new-born babe, belikes. Ah, wirrah, wirrah—" and she was off again.

In the end I convinced the old lady that her secret would be safe with me and that I would not "hand him over to the law" until I was sure the man was guilty. Then she came out with it.

"One of those lads who came in here that night, mind ye now I'll not say who he was, but he was enough like Joq Kinsella to be his blood brother."

I thanked her and departed.

I did not at once look up this Kinsella, but I learned that he was employed locally as a night watchman and gathered quite a few interesting facts about his family and antecedents.

One came as a startling bit of news. His brother, Tom Kinsella, had served a six-months' sentence in the Pittsfield jail for shooting his mother-in-law. Everybody, including the court apparently, had believed the shooting was accidental; but in some way Kinsella had been convicted under a minor charge growing out of the shooting and had been "put away" on the theory, apparently, that he deserved it anyhow. As a result, he came out of prison swearing vengeance against society in general and his native community in particular.

With this information, I returned immediately to New York. We found out when Tom Kinsella had been released from prison and learned that it was in time for him to have taken part in the burglaries.

From Pittsfield we traced him without difficulty to Bridgeport, Conn., but discovered that he had gone from that city to the Greenpoint section in Brooklyn.

The chances were good that he was still making the latter place his headquarters; but actually to locate him there was a good deal like finding the familiar needle in a haystack.

Here again the use of constructive imagination came into play. I reasoned that Kinsella—if he were indeed one of the gang we were after—must have had a good deal of loot to dispose of in the past few months, and it was at least possible that he might be foolish enough to pawn some of it in shops near where he lived.

Following up this idea I took a run out to Greenpoint. At the very first pawnshop I came to I located the gold watch which had been stolen from Dr. Grosvenor. The broker saw quickly enough that something was up, so to shield himself he came right out and told me that the watch had been brought in by a Mrs. Kinsella, who lived in the next block.

I ordered him to lock it up in his safe for the time being
(Continued on page 93)



True Tales of a House Detective



When the Police Failed

IN FIFTEEN years as a hotel detective I haven't had much to do with gangsters, but I certainly ran into fireworks with one, and I don't want any more, thank you.

It was two years ago in June that a big, dark complexioned guy walked up to the desk and wrote with a splash of ink in the register: "Jim Seldon and two."

"I want two bedrooms and two baths with a good-sized room between. I don't want any fire escapes outside the windows or any balconies."

Those were his orders to the clerk.

"What price?" the clerk asked.

"I don't care what price," the fellow snapped, "but I want service."

I was in the cashier's office looking over a bad check and I got a laugh the way that clerk had to jump around, for he was one of those birds that likes to high-hat the customers and you would think the way he generally acted that he was doing you a great favor to give you any kind of a room at all.

I turned so that I could get a look at the big fellow through a smooth place in the frosted glass and I noticed there were two men with him. Valet and secretary, was my first thought and then I noticed that they were nervous-looking eggs and I snapped out of it, for if they weren't a couple of hop-heads, then I had no business wearing a dick pin.

A big, hard guy might be just that and nothing more, but set a couple of hoppers flanking him, and it meant only one thing to me—a gun and his cover. I'd seen them before, but usually there was only one man guarding the big boy. This fellow must be a top gun from somewhere if he carried two.

I had to know who he was, and I knew the register would tell me nothing. I waited till the clerk has passed out the key and the buttons were off to room them and then I took a look at the book. They had what we called the A suite.

My next stop was at the switchboard.

"Listen, Agnes," I told the girl. "I want you to report to me on every telephone call that comes from A suite. List every call they make in the house or out and get an earful whenever you can. When they

call for setups, send the boy direct to me. I'll be in the silver pantry."

Then I hot-footed it out to where they kept the cracked ice, the seltzer bottles and the ginger ale. I polished an ice bowl, a fizz bottle and three glasses. Sure enough, I had hardly finished when along came a rush order for the makings.

"Now, listen, kid," I said to the bellhop. "I want you to carry this stuff on this tray, and I don't want you to touch it. If you lay a finger on anything but the tray, I'll get your job."

A Clever Ruse

HE ANKLED off, doing as he was told. So far, so good. What I had to figure out now was how to get the stuff out of there without having it marked all up. Thinks I to myself, I'd better go and get it. I gave the boys plenty of time to put away their drinks and then knocked at the door.

"Listen," I said, "I'm the house man and I just got a tip the feds are going to look us over. I've passed the word in the dining-rooms, but I don't want them to bother you in here, so if you're through with these things, I'll take them out of here."

All three glasses were close together on the table, so I stuck my fingers inside of them and picked them up that way and set them on the tray.

"All right, bull," said the big fellow, "but don't worry too much about us. We can take care of the feds."

"I don't doubt it," I laughed, "but we don't like to have anybody bothered."

"Have a shot yourself?" this Seldon asked me.

"Not while I'm on duty," I said and thanked him. Then I took the tray and hit the steps. When I got to my room I found I had the calling cards of those three lads as pretty as anything you ever saw. There was the three kinds of marks. The big fellow's marks was on all of them, and the hop-heads' prints were on two of the glasses.

Well, I shot off a couple of telegrams and in a couple of hours here come word that the big fellow was Mace En-

field—or words to that effect. You'd recognize his name quick if I used his real monicker.

I had to whistle at that for he was a big time gun man and I didn't care for any of his game.

About that time the telephone girl got me on the wire.

"Hello, Link," she said, "your friends are going to have company. A man by the name of Mr. Bradshaw is coming to see them. They gave him a ring about an hour ago. Nobody knew anything about Mr. Bradshaw when they first called but just now he answered the phone himself. I called the girl and she says the number is private. I've got it here."

Well, there was nothing for me to do but get a room across the hall from suite A and watch who showed up. I did and I saw plenty. Mr. Bradshaw was nobody but Mike Adler, one of the ritziest politicians of our fair city. He was a heavy-set, dignified old party deeply engaged in trying to live down that nickname of Mike. I knew him by the crease in his neck before I saw the rest of him.

I wouldn't have thought much of it myself, if I hadn't got the lowdown on the people he was calling on. What was Mike Adler doing with a big time gun and his flankers?

There was only one answer to that that I could figure. They weren't the type that he would have any business with except a killing and that meant Mike Adler had got himself into a jackpot he couldn't get out of without blasting.

It didn't take long for me to dope it out that Mike Adler was having somebody put on the spot and I began to wonder just what I could do about it. In the first place, I had to find out who it was. I crossed the hall and used my pass key on a broom closet that backed up to their middle room and that didn't have partitions any too thick but, although I could hear some words, I didn't get what I was after.

Setting the Stage

WHEN Adler had bowed himself out after laying down what I figured was probably half a grand, I slid off to my own spot and rang up Larry Milton on the News.

"Listen, Larry," I said, "I haven't got anything for you but I need some help and it may give you the inside on something later. Can you wag those skinny legs of yours up this way right off?"

"Sure, Link. Wait till I clean up a yarn I'm finishing and I'll be there in two jerks."

He showed up in about ten minutes.

"I've just found out," I said, "that Mike Adler is having trouble with somebody. It's probably someone he doesn't want anyone to know he's ever seen. Looks to me like a life and death matter and I've got to find out quick who it could possibly be."

Larry suggested two or three people but none of them seemed to fit.

"Listen," I said, "you know Adler. Is there any kind of an outfit, he's outspoken against—anybody he is supposed to be fighting that he might be in cahoots with?"

"Yes," he said. "He's always riding Spec Rouse. If he's been playing with Spec, he sure wouldn't want it spilled. He'd certainly raise hell to keep that from coming out."

That was big stuff for Spec Rouse was as near king of our underworld as anybody ever got to be.

"All right," I told Larry, "you keep an eye on Spec Rouse and if anything happens to him come and see me."

Then I went out and took a long walk.

About a mile away I stepped into a pay station and called police headquarters.

"Listen," I said to the night captain. "There's three gunmen at the Barry house in suite A. Mike Adler left them about an hour ago. What I don't know won't hurt me, but you'd better cover Spec Rouse till they leave town."

"Who is this?" the captain yelled.

"Never mind," I said, "it might not be healthy for me if you found out."

A little further on I got another idea. I got me another phone and called the number Agnes had given me.

"Is Mr. Bradshaw there?" I asked and in a couple of minutes I knew I was talking to Mike Adler.

"Listen," I said. "We've been turned up. Somebody knows what's coming off. What say we leave the jack at the hotel desk and duck?"

"Is that the kind of birds you are?" he snarled. "Didn't I tell you it had to be done quick? Get action. That's all I want."

More Telephone Work

WELL, that didn't work. But I tried another one. I called the hotel and asked for Seldon.

"Listen, Mace," I said, "the stuff's off. You take the laydown for expense money and lam. I've just found out that fellow has been tipped and it's too dangerous."

"What you trying to do, Mike, welsh on me?" Seldon snapped. "She goes as she lays." He hung up.

Well, there was only one thing left for me to do and I did it. I got Spec Rouse on the telephone.

"Rouse," I said. "You don't know me and if I can help it you never will but somebody is trying to put you on the spot tonight. Go covered till I give you the office. And if you get in a jam turn loose all the heat you've got."

"All right, friend," he said. "I'm not surprised. If I come out all right, there'll be half a grand in a plain envelope for you at the Gold Club pool hall in the name of Jake Thompson. And after that, if you need anything, call me up."

Believe me, that was all right too.

About three o'clock the next afternoon, my three pets in suite A checked out and I saw them hump it in a big blue sedan. I felt better.

But that night when I was getting a breath of air about six o'clock I picked up a green extra and what do you think? My three friends were in the morgue and Spec Rouse had surrendered to the police with a dozen witnesses that his mob had done the shooting in self defense.

Next morning Mike Adler's picture was on the front page with an obit three columns long and all about how tough it was that he had broken under the strain of his service to the community and had taken his own life or been killed while cleaning a gun.

A couple of days later I dropped in at the Gold Club pool room.

"Anything here for Jake Thompson?" I asked off hand.

The boy behind the cigar counter looked blank. "Anything left here for Jake Thompson?" he asked one of the other men.

"There was," the other lad said, "but Jake was in and got it this afternoon."

"He ask for it?" I questioned the fellow.

"No. I just saw him and gave it to him. Anything wrong?"

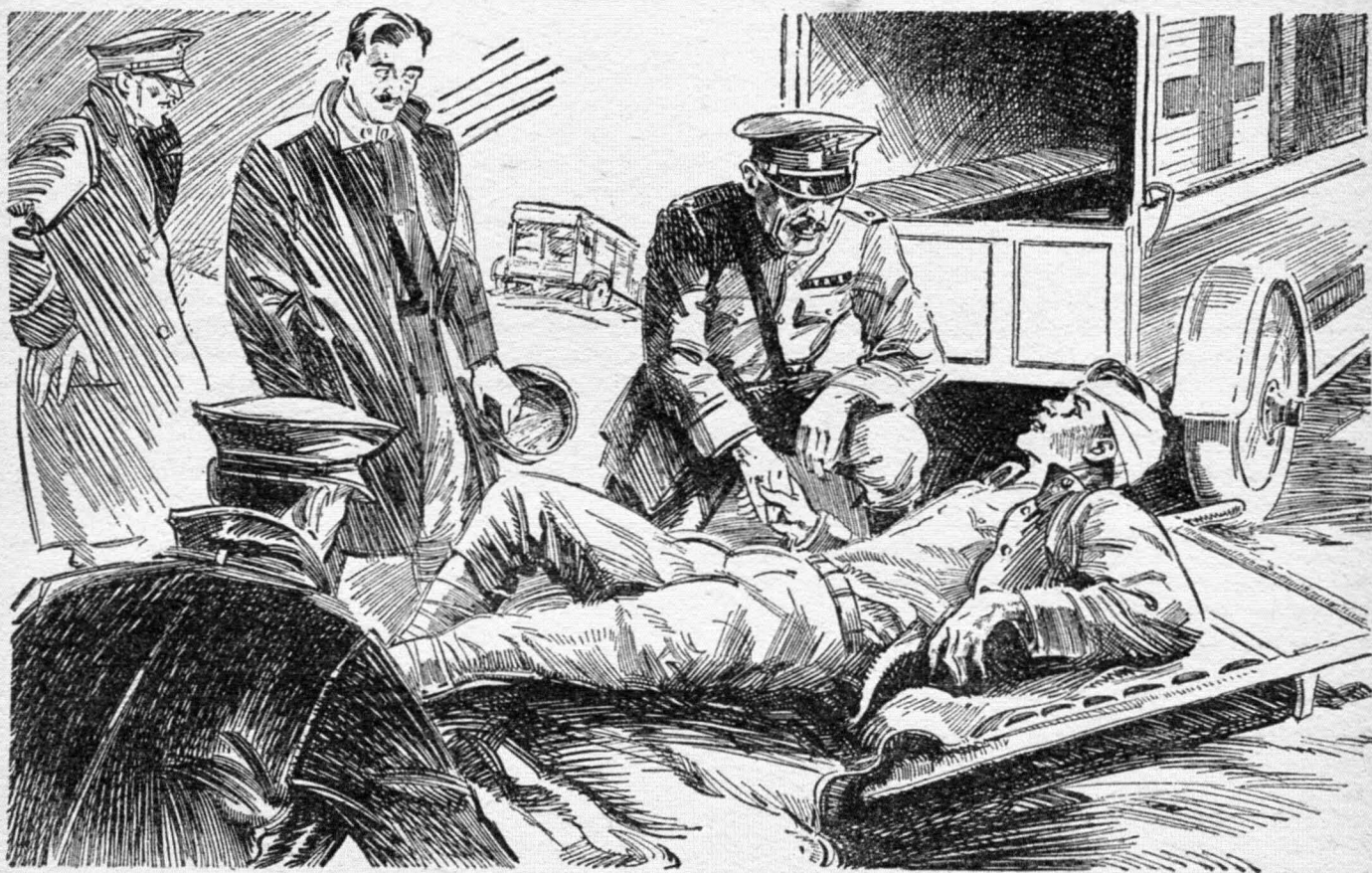
"Oh, no," I said, "not if he got it all right."

And that was that.

The Spy Champion

By ROBERT PEERY

Private Sam Tatum was known as the scuffling champion of Chinkey-pin Corner—but that wasn't anything 'compared to what he got into when he became a fighting detective chasing spies in the A. E. F.



"We're going to hang all sorts of medals on you, Sam," said General Dawson,

MAJOR-GENERAL Christian B. Dawson, commander of the 108th Division, dropped his head in cupped palms, tightened the grip of his massive jaws and fought back surrender to the madness that rang through his brain. His eyes were red-rimmed and puffed in dark circles from his long vigil. His fingers trembled with the passion of defeat—and with the overwhelming knowledge that his son had failed!

It was bad enough that his crack regiment had been bowled over by a night attack and that his reserves were fighting stubbornly but futilely to beat off the rushing hordes of Prussians, but that his son should have made a complete fool of himself in a matter which would probably cause trouble with G. H. Q. was far worse.

He had long since given up hope of David's return. A runner from Company M had reported that Lieut-

enant Dawson and two M Company men had gone out into No-man's land and had been caught in the attack. Some firing had been heard in the wood ahead; it was believed that all three had been killed. Stragglers from the 432nd had reported that their front had been literally swept away in a terrific drive in which the Germans had used small machine guns, flame-throwers and grenades.

And Captain Nason had admitted everything an hour ago. He had confessed that he was a German spy and that he had, in his capacity of Divisional Intelligence Officer, faked the letter which Lieutenant Dawson had gone forward to leave upon the dead body of an American soldier near the German lines. The staff had learned too late that the envelope had contained, not the false information they wished the Germans to find, but a copy of the big map at G. H. Q., Chaumont, which contained detailed dispositions

of all American forces from Poperingue to Verdun! It was a document the German Imperial Staff would have been willing to pay millions for!

And David, his son, had now probably lost his life in an attempt to give this valuable map to the enemy! Why had the boy not suspected Nason? Why had they all not suspected him, for that matter?

Everything possible had been done to break down Nason's story. But when the two officers from G-2 had arrived around midnight, they corroborated his statement. Nason had known all along that he would be arrested. General Dawson had watched them take the officer away, had heard him cursing the chance that had betrayed him to men who did not want to believe that he told the truth.

"The wine I drank at Regimental was filthy stuff, General," Nason had said. "I needed a stimulant to go through with planting that map on the soldier's body and to put your son out of the way. But no doubt he has carried out the mission as well as I could have done it."

For an hour now every effort had been made to locate Lieutenant Dawson and the two men who had gone forward with him. But all patrols had been turned back by the most vicious machine gun fire. Line officers reported that it would be impossible to break through until morning.

And morning, the General knew, would be too late! The Germans would have the precious map that would enable them to break the Allied lines at the weakest points. They would know where concentration dumps and flying fields were located.

A Voice From the German Lines

ONE thin hope remained. Lieutenant Dawson had ordered a reel of wire and a phone to a forward dugout before hopping over for his foray. That line now looped over the new barricaded shell holes in which the retreating infantry had taken shelter and on into a new, more horrible No-man's land. Perhaps the Lieutenant, or one of the men with him, might get back to the phone with information. A signal man had been detailed to keep the phones at division strapped to his ears on the slender chance that the Germans would overlook the phone at the other end and that someone would use it to clear up the matter of the missing map.

General Dawson raised his head as a staff officer called his name.

"Somebody on the line, sir. Asks to speak with you. It's about David."

The General sprang to his feet and pushed into the signal room. His hands were trembling as he fastened the receivers about his ears. His gray, clipped mustache touched the black transmitter as he spoke.

"General Dawson—Headquarters Blue Division."

"Is that there—air you th' General?"

Officers and signalmen crowded about the table. The voice in the phones at the General's ears seemed to come from another world—that voice that seeped along the wire that skirted shell holes, ran beside dead and dying men and ended in a pitch-black dugout three hundred yards beyond the German front line.

"Yes, yes; this is General Dawson. What is it? Where are you?"

"This here is Sam Tatum, M Company—er, Gen-

eral. I jist wanted to report about Lieutenant Dawson an' to tell yo' to send somebody after me. I'm inside the German lines and don't know the language or nothin'—"

"What about the letter you men were to have placed on the dead man out there?"

"Yes, sir! we done that—yes, sir! But we run into trouble. I had to knock over three or four Heinies with a sho-sho gun. They knocked me out an' captured Son—that's my buddy. I dunno where they took him to—"

The General gulped nervously and passed a shaking hand over his eyes.

"But what about Da— Lieutenant Dawson?" he asked.

There was a pause. The General's eyes narrowed and flickered spasmodically. A heavy silence filled the dugout. The breathing of the men gathered there was like a heavy, laden wind.

"He's dead, sir!" said the voice in the receivers.

A staff major picked up the transmitter that clattered to the table; other hands removed the clamp from General Dawson's head. Officers led him away.

A signal captain picked up the phones, adjusted the straps across his hair and spoke hurriedly.

"Hello! Hello! Yes, this is headquarters. Is there any way in God's world for you to tell us where that envelope went?"

"Well, an' I don' know, sir," replied Sam Tatum. "Yo' see, the Heinies captured Son before we got to plant the letter like Lieutenant Dawson wanted to. Yes, sir, the letter was on Son. He was a little feller—my buddy—an' we thought—"

"Is there any way to tell where they took him? Old man, that wasn't the letter Lieutenant Dawson thought it was. It contained a map that was stolen from G. H. Q. at Chaumont. We've got to get it back! Captain Nason was arrested as a spy."

A subdued whistle sounded over the wire.

"Great Gawd!" cried Sam. "Me git that map? Why—"

"Try it, anyway," snapped the Captain. "We've tried to break through and rescue you, but we can't do it. If there's any way in the world for you to find out where that map is now—"

The line suddenly went dead. The Captain realized that at once and cut off his frenzied sentence.

A Large Assignment

AND Sam Tatum, rear-rank private, lanky, unlettered citizen of the State of Alabama, knew it, too. He knew that a shell from a Yankee or German battery had at last broken his last avenue of contact with his friends. He began cursing softly and jiggling the double hook. But at length he gave up and stared wide-eyed into the blackness of the shallow dugout.

He crawled to the narrow opening and looked out. He could hear the rumble of voices speaking an alien tongue. Suddenly he remembered how difficult had been his successful attempt to reach the phone. It had required all of half an hour for him to wriggle his way across that narrow strip of ground between the wood and the abandoned dugout. The assaulting wave of German infantry had established a machine gun post within twenty feet of the dugout itself. Three times he had been forced to flatten on the frozen ground while patrols filtered forward about him.

And now they were asking him to try to find what had happened to Son and the letter that had caused all the trouble. It would mean crawling back to the wood where Lieutenant Dawson's body lay; it would mean floundering around behind the enemy lines searching for a needle in a haystack!

But what chance would he have, remaining where he was? Certainly he would be discovered before many hours. He could not hope for assistance from his friends before daylight. He thought about Son Latham, the warty little runt he had cussed and kicked and fought for!

And it was Son he was thinking about when he finally summoned the courage to scramble through the shattered door of the dugout and begin the nerve-racking crawl back to the wrecked corpse where he and Son and the Lieutenant had fought it out with the German patrol.

The moon still flooded the earth with silver light. Carefully he snaked across to a shell hole, dropped down and waited. Then another short crawl—and a period of waiting. He lost all track of time. Once he crouched in dread while a noisy wire detail plodded along in the darkness—grim, hulking silhouettes against the sheen of the moon. But at last he reached the huddle of blasted tree trunks and raised himself upon hands and knees to estimate just where the Lieutenant's body had lain.

"*Wer ist ess?*"

Sam dropped noiselessly at the sudden challenge. Beneath the curve of his helmet he caught the glint of moonlight on a rounded German pot helmet. Suddenly he realized that he had not the slightest weapon with which to defend himself! His hands closed and unclosed nervously. If only he knew a few words of German so that he might get close enough to use his hands on that German throat!

He lay there and listened to the stealthy approach of the enemy soldier. The figure of the man loomed nearer and higher. A glint of silver ran along the poised bayonet. Sam's muscles flexed for the leap—his only chance—a swift, launching movement to end in his leathery hands at the German's throat!

"My God! *Big Boy!*"

Sam's body drained of action. Limply he sat down and stared at the man beside him.

"Cripes, Lieutenant," he muttered. "I thought yo' was daid. I tol' your old man yo' was daid!"

"You've seen him? Where did you see him?" asked the officer.

"I talked to him on that phone back there. They told me Nason was a spy and that the letter Son had on him was a map that they don't want the Germans to have. They told me to try to get it!"

Sam could almost feel the officer recoil as the shock of the words gripped him. He stared off into space.

"But—I made the papers up myself—but—he must have switched them. I've suspected something wrong. But he was coming up with me to help. That's why I got him drunk back at Regimental!"

"They says it's so," argued Sam.

"Sam, you've got to help. I rigged up in this Jerry outfit—took it off a Sergeant in the woods, there—to try to get back to our lines. But now I'm going to use it to try to find what they did with Son—and the map."

Sam Tatum deliberated for a moment.

"All right," he said presently. "Git me one o' them

monkey suits offa some o' these dead Heinies in this woods. I'll have to go with yo'—what with tellin' your old man you was daid when yo' wasn't. But remember one thing. I'm deaf an' dumb if we run into any Germans. You'll have to do all the talkin' that Pilsener-Katzenjammer language."

Heading for Trouble

FIFTEEN minutes later two men dressed in the uniform of the 34th Division of the Kaiser's *stusstruppen*, one bearing the insignia and chevrons of a Sergeant of Infantry, the other bearing no tabs of authority on the shoulders and collar of his gray-green coat, crept beyond the wood and gazed upon the valley beyond the shattered town of Antremont. Their eyes could see only the vague outline of road and forest, but their ears heard various sounds—cries of infuriated caisson drivers, the rattle of artillery harness, the rumble of wagons on a road. The Germans were bringing up a battery of guns.

Occasionally a shell-burst stabbed the silver with blossoming orange and red. Now and then the far-off crackle and lash of machine guns could be heard.

"Jist one o' two things," said Sam dolefully. "Either we git fed on turnip soup and potato bread for the rest of the war, or we gits bumped off in a scrap."

The Lieutenant snapped his head sidewise and gazed at the doughboy.

"Don't you know what they'll do to us if they catch us in German uniforms?" he asked.

"Put us to work on the roads, more'n likely," responded Sam.

"They'll shoot us against a wall," snapped the Lieutenant. "We're spies—not scouts. International rules of warfare, you know. A scout is a man who goes forward in his country's uniform. A spy is a man who puts on the uniform of the enemy for purposes of deception."

Sam gulped heavily but said nothing. He began to wish that he had not brought up the subject at all. More plainly than ever he was beginning to realize that he and the Lieutenant were letting themselves in for trouble and plenty of it!

"We must try to find somebody that will know what they did with the American that was captured there in the wood," said the officer. "If we could locate some Germans—not officers—they might talk to me. My German is fairly good, though I'm afraid the accent wouldn't get by with an officer."

A few minutes later, as they crawled forward to where several ammunition wagons made a square, they saw six or seven Germans huddled about a shielded charcoal fire.

"Stand up, Sam," ordered Dawson. "I'm going forward. Keep your mouth closed. Just grin when they say anything to you. I'll answer for you. I'm going to test my accent and try to find out where they took Son."

Together they walked forward, calmly, in spite of the tom-tom beat of their hearts and sat down in the circle of men. Sam poked his hands toward the warm cannister of red hot coals. A big German beside the Lieutenant moved over, took a short, stubby black pipe from his lips and muttered a guttural greeting. Lieutenant Dawson rattled a sentence in German while Sam held his breath and whisked his hands briskly together. A lengthy conversation between

officer and German followed. The German waved his pudgy palms, struck clenched fist into hand, and then laughed uproariously. Sam saw that the Lieutenant, in his role of German Sergeant, was being rather gruff. Then he asked a few questions. The German private got to his feet and made a lengthy explanation, gesturing turns and roads with weaving hands. Dawson nodded in understanding. He growled an order at Sam. The doughboy rose and followed Dawson away into the shadows.

"They knew about the capture and they knew where he was taken," whispered Dawson. "We're in luck! They carried Son to Major Pfeindorf's headquarters which is alongside the narrow gauge railroad."

They hurried forward, past jangling caissons, ammunition wagons, supply trains, and at last came up to the railroad. In the East a faint glow presaged the coming of the day. They passed several soldiers who promptly saluted the *psuedo-unteroffizier* who trudged beside Sam.

The narrow rails of the line appeared between chalk cliffs, shoulder high. At one point Sam could see a squad of machine gunners setting up a section of large type water-cooled Maxims. Fifty yards farther they were forced to step aside to let a small, puffing engine of continental type drag six or seven gondolas, filled with German infantrymen, toward the front. A few yards ahead of them they saw, when the chugging engine had passed along in a smelly cloud of smoke, a sentry pacing back and forth before a curtained, heavily sandbagged dugout cut into the face of the small cliff.

"That is the Major's headquarters," said Dawson. "I'm going to frame up an excuse to see him and then I'm going to tell him that I overheard a conversation concerning the papers found on the captured American prisoner. We've got to find out where Son is. I only hope that the boy will have sense enough to play up if he recognizes us. Our lives are going to hang on the first impression I make on that Major. Follow close behind me—play dumb as hell—and don't make a move to escape or start a fight until you see me tug at my nose. That will be the signal for both of us to go into action; and that's going to be our last chance for getting out of this thing alive."

In The Midst of the Enemy

THE sentry halted them. Dawson growled an answer. The next minute Sam found himself trudging at the Lieutenant's heels, down the dugout stair. Several kerosene lamps lighted the interior. A heavy, crop-haired, mustached man sat at a desk. Other men—guards, staff officers, orderlies—were busy at various tasks. A signal squad was operating a switchboard in a far corner.

Major Pfeindorf picked up a combination earphone and transmitter from its horizontal bracket, snapped a crisp order, then replaced the instrument. His eye fell upon the infantry sergeant and private. At the same moment a staff officer, noting that the Major had been approached by improper method, got hurriedly to his feet and stepped up to Dawson. But the Major waved the officer aside.

A crackling German sentence rolled from the Major's lips. Sam watched Dawson out of the corner of his eye. His knees turned to jelly and his stomach became a tight, hard ball. How would they ever get

through this thing? Dawson was crazy to have thought they could get away with such a stunt.

The German Major and the Lieutenant conversed for some seconds. Sam found himself staring with anxiety at the Major's face. Was Dawson getting away with this stuff? Or was that smile on the fat officer's face a sign that both of them already were suspected of being spies? The Major fired a series of brisk questions at Dawson. Dawson answered them carefully, slowly—as if sparring for time.

Suddenly a door—canvas nailed to sparse uprights—swung open and an American soldier whose arms were tightly gripped by stalwart German guards stepped through. Sam gasped, lurched forward for an instant, then tightened the grip of his consciousness. The soldier was Son! His face was streaked with dried blood. Lieutenant Dawson made the almost imperceptible gesture of squaring his shoulders. Major Pfeindorf turned about in his chair and surveyed the prisoner. Then he snarled a command.

The guards guided Son toward a bunk beside the stair and allowed him to collapse there. Clearly, Son had reached the limit of his endurance. Sam felt the cords of his neck tighten at the contemplation of such horrors as Son had been through.

Then came the second shock. An officer dressed in the uniform of the American army stepped through the door. Upon his shoulders glittered the silver bars of a captain; at his waist was a regulation belt, but the gun in the holster was not a Colt but a Luger. For a moment Sam fought through the haze that moiled up about him. He glanced sidewise at Lieutenant Dawson, and what he saw there—limned in the suddenly blanched cheeks of the officer—was enough to convince him that this American officer who seemed quite at home in an enemy dugout must surely be the spy—Captain Nason! The man who had betrayed the American army, and who had stolen the map the Germans had found upon Son!

Sam's big freckled hand closed sweatily upon the grip of the grounded Mauser at his side. His breath moved into his throat like a warm river. He glanced once more at Dawson. The signal! Certainly now was the time or never! Nason would recognize Dawson at any moment now.

Nason recoiled sharply, then leaned forward, clutching at the table. His eyes swept over Dawson's face. The Lieutenant was rigid as stone. There was not the slightest flicker of muscle or nerve in his impassive face. How had Nason escaped his captors? Why didn't Dawson give the signal for pitching into whatever a fight would offer in the way of escape or tonic for tortured nerves?

The dugout was in an uproar now. The Major and Nason were standing shoulder to shoulder, mad with rage—cursing, gesticulating. Son came up from the bunk and his voice—a startled monosyllable of recognition—lent its treble note to the general chaos that reigned. Guards sprang forward and stripped Lieutenant Dawson of his side arms. Sam flushed from head to toe with chagrin. Why wasn't Dawson giving the signal?

Leather belts and pieces of rope whisked forth. Sam felt them strapping his hands beside his back. Son Latham staggered forward, his small face livid with madness. A big Prussian felled him with one gargantuan blow of doubled fist. Sam felt his face go red with anger. Unuttered oaths welled up in his

throat. Shoot him against a wall! Not until somebody paid for that blow that Son had received!

The American captain folded up a large map and stowed it away in an oiled paper envelope. He then turned to Lieutenant Dawson, scowling viciously.

"Move out, Dawson," he ordered. "The man with you is an American, too. Bring the other prisoner forward. We'll take the next troop train back to the rear. Nice work, Lieutenant; if I had not escaped and gotten through the lines, you might have gotten an opportunity to destroy this map. You are a brave man. Your august father—the doddering old idiot!—will be proud to learn, through the Red Cross, of your death—tomorrow morning, against a stone wall!"

Sam saw how Lieutenant Dawson's face tightened, saw how his hands strained for a second against the knotted rope. Then Dawson smiled.

"We're not through, Nason," he said evenly.

"No, you're not. That's true. You've got to face a firing squad yet!"

Behind three prodding bayonets the prisoners moved up the dugout stair and beside the dummy line. The sky was the color of a lemon now; gray clouds scudded swiftly overhead. In a few minutes the sun would tip the eastern horizon with a crimson banner.

Headed For Germany

THE train, its gondolas empty now, clattered around a curve and halted on order of the sentry. Sam, the Lieutenant and a very pale and wobbly Son Latham were hoisted up and dumped bodily onto the grimy floor of the car directly behind the engine. Three armed guards climbed aboard and took up posts at opposite ends and at the middle of the gondola. Captain Nason crawled on and swung himself over inside the car just as the puffy little engine got into motion.

Sam hunched himself closer to Lieutenant Dawson and opposite the guard who leaned against the other wall of the car. The train wheezed and snorted, and was presently pulling away up the grade. Dense smoke boiled up and enveloped them. Cinders rained down like hailstones. The rumble of distant artillery was not quite lost in the nearer, more emphatic jangle and wheeze of the jolting train of cars. Now and then a shell exploded nearby; pale flares leapt almost to the Zenith far away to the South. Dawson backed toward Sam—slowly, carefully.

One of the guards pointed. Nason turned to follow the man's gesture. Suddenly Dawson's hands fell upon the strap that bound Sam's hands. Deftly his fingers tugged, moved and played over the buckle. With sharply indrawn breath Sam felt the strap sag. His heart galloped; his hands were free. Cautiously he turned about so that his hands touched the cords about the Lieutenant's wrists. With eyes fast upon the three guards and Nason, he explored the mystery of the harshly taut rope. It would be troublesome to untie. His nails bit down on the knot. A guard moved across the swaying floor of the gondola and stopped above them. He turned and spoke to Nason.

"Move away, Dawson," snarled the Captain.

Dawson obeyed, and Sam's spirits dropped once more in despair. Son's hands were unbound, but Son was weak from loss of blood. Son couldn't be counted on in a fight. Sam surveyed the situation. He weighed chances and found all of them not worth the

taking. Nason's Luger would do most damage. The car was narrow and not too long; the guards would be handicapped in using bayonets—but they could shoot! And, besides, the Lieutenant had said for him to wait for the signal. But something, Sam felt, should be done at once. It would never do to wait until they were jailed at some German headquarters. The maps would by then have gone where they could be used—where copies could be made.

Sam glanced down at his hobnailed shoes. He wriggled his fingers and the strap slipped off them. His bare knuckles! They would be his only weapons in a fight. He remembered how the gang had called him "The Scuffling Fool." "Scuffling!" These New Englanders had laughed at the word. They'd never heard of fighting free for-all—gouge, scratch, kick and fist to fist! But if one Sam Tatum, Lieutenant Dawson and Son Latham ever hoped to see the right side of the lines again, well—scuffling would have to do it!

The Lieutenant coughed. Sam glanced quickly up. Dawson gazed directly at the big private and twisted his face about in a wry gesture. Sam stared. The Lieutenant's left eyelid drooped and his head wagged slowly up and down. The signal! Of course, it was! The Lieutenant's hands must be free; he was giving the signal for the fight in the only way possible without letting Nason and the guards know that he was ready.

With no more sound than a tiger makes when he strikes through jungle grasses, Sam was on his feet and plunging across the rocking car, straight for Captain Nason and the guard. His long arms were extended far to each side and his bullet head, topped with the greenish helmet, crashed between the two men. His arms closed like twin steel vises. His elbows crashed under their chins and then tightened convulsively upon their throats. They thrashed into violent struggles.

Battling for Life

SAM heard the rattle in their constricted throats. His feet were lifted high as both men strove violently to free themselves. The guard swung hard with his doubled first. Sam ducked and took the blow on his German helmet. Nason, on Sam's right, placed his feet against the wall of the car and kicked out viciously. The three of them staggered backward. Nason's left arm pushed back between the two bodies and the next thing Sam knew, the officer's fist was beating a particularly vicious tattoo against his ribs. The big private tightened the muscles of his side against the blows and bore down with redoubled fury on the throats of the two enemies.

A Mauser fired somewhere behind. Sam caught a glimpse of the Lieutenant struggling to connect his hands on an enemy's throat. Over in a corner, partially obscured by a pall of gray smoke, two men were fighting in primitive fashion. Son must, thought Sam, have dived for a guard's legs. But Son would be killed. Damned hard part of it. Son was too weak to last in a rough and tumble!

Nason's hands tore savagely at the arm beneath his chin. Sam's reply to such effort was a hard jerk of his flexed muscles. Nason's body sagged down. Sam saw him trying to get his fingers on the butt of the Luger—saw him gain his objective. The gun came up. Suddenly Sam released the pressure of his arms.

Nason and the guard went down in a heap. Nason's hand came up and the Luger spat a jet of flame. Sam plowed like a mad man. His left boot kicked out and the Luger spun from Nason's hand to clang against the side wall.

As Sam reached to reclaim the weapon, a Mauser gun butt clanged against his helmet. He reeled dizzily against the wall. Somebody bolted headlong into him, but he shoved them back with his charging shoulders.

He ducked low and caught a guard in the crotch. Up he heaved. The German clawed desperately, but his body, under Sam's almost superhuman leverage, tilted over the edge of the car and dropped onto the flying earth below. Sweat was driving in rivulets down Sam's face. He wiped his hand over his forehead, pushed away his hair, then shot forward to set his foot down upon a Mauser just as a dazed German groped for the weapon.

Lieutenant Dawson reeled to his feet, staring with distended eyes at the lifeless form at his feet. Then he staggered about and picked up a Mauser rifle. Sam stepped away and shot his fist straight beneath a pot helmet. There was a terrific clump as the man was flung backward. Nason had gotten to his feet and was crawling along the wall toward the rear. Another guard entered the fight. Over in the corner next to the engine tender lay a limp khaki bundle. Sam's throat choked with emotion. Old Son was down—out of it—dead! He charged like a battering ram.

He slipped under the lunging bayonet's path and grappled for the man's throat. A fist crashed into his jaw. He wheeled and saw Nason squared off like a boxer.

Flying Fists

THE train was slowing down! That meant more trouble. The fireman and engine driver would be hopping into the melée soon. He must get Nason and get him quick.

Sam sidestepped and hooked one to the jaw that rocked the spy. He followed up the blow furiously. His fists slammed through Nason's ineffectual guard, beat down his resistance, and drew a flow of blood to the Captain's lips. Nason cowered and retreated under the storm of flying fists. He dropped to his knees. His lips uttered frantic words of surrender. Sam, spying the Luger, stepped away and recovered it.

"Git flat o' the floor," he ordered Nason. "I ain't takin' no chance o' you jumpin' overboard. If you move a toe I'll drill yo' clean!"

One shot from the Luger felled the man who was pressing Dawson back against the wall. He lurched forward. His bayonet drove into the wall three inches from Dawson's leg. The train was slowing.

Currack! A bullet kicked splinters from the wall close beside Sam's ear. He turned and fired at the pot helmet that appeared over the wall of the car toward the engine. He dropped to his knee. Both he and Dawson returned the fire. Another Luger poked over the wall and cut loose. Sam felt a raking pain across his shoulder. Again he fired and one of the helmets disappeared. His eyes flicked nervously. He pressed the trigger once more. It clicked. Empty!

Son Comes to Life

OVER against the wall a khaki bundle crept into life. Dawson worked frantically at a jammed cartridge in the Mauser. Sam watched that khaki bundle. A white arm stole up along the car end. Suddenly it leaped. The Luger—poking over the edge of the car—growled and jumped, but that white hand had closed upon it and the bullet that erupted from the muzzle plowed harmlessly into the car floor.

Son wasn't dead. He was alive! Sam tore down the length of the car like a charging back. He took the wall in a flying leap and brought his gun down across the neck of the man who balanced there on the coupling. The man sagged and dropped between the rails. A whirl of smoke broke about Sam's body.

"Watch Nason," yelled Sam, as he vaulted back inside the car. Nason was trying to get over the side. Dawson grabbed at his heels and jerked him back.

"Don't shoot," cried Nason. "I'm whipped. You fools would fight the devil and all his imps!"

"Yeah," said Son Latham, leaning against the wall for support he needed badly. "Ol' Sam—he's the scufflin' champion of Chinkey-pin Corner. Why, he could—" He fainted then and Sam eased him down to the floor. Dawson spilled water from a German canteen over the soldier's face. Son's eyelids fluttered. He grinned at Sam.

Lieutenant Dawson ripped Nason's coat away and stowed the oiled paper envelope beneath his own German coat. Suddenly Sam yelled a warning.

"They're comin', Lieutenant!" Dawson ran to his side. Across the valley floor a company of men armed with rifles and bayonets scurried, headed straight for the stalled train.

"We gotta start this thing off—an' backwards, too!" cried Sam. In his excitement of victory over the guards and the capture of Nason he had forgotten that they were still many kilometers inside the German lines!

He scrambled over the wall and into the small engine cab. A puzzling array of levers greeted him. A country sawmill popped into his mind. His hand closed on the brake lever unerringly. As he moved the rod, the train started up—but in the wrong direction. He glanced through the cab window. That platoon of soldiers was coming—and coming fast! He jerked and moved everything in sight. There was a shriek of escaping steam. The wheels on the diminutive engine spun on the rails. Sam eased up on the lever. The wheels grabbed the rails and the train started backing up. Little by little it gained momentum. The throttle moved back under Sam's slow pressure until it stopped against a lug.

A swish of lead beat a terrific tattoo against the cab shield. Sam crouched low, and with his left hand grabbed at the chain attached to the firebox door and swung it open. The fire was burning low.

"Gimme a fireman, here!" he shrieked. "Let Son hold a gun on Nason, Lieutenant." Dawson came on the run. He leaped over the small coal tender and grabbed a shovel. Black coal dust swished into the opening; the fire roared high.

"All right, Lieutenant. Git back to the car. It's down hill all the way now. I'm gonna run this outfit to the end of the line an' let 'er bump wheah she will. Git ready to jump if they try to derail us!"

Sam leaned out of the window. Ahead he saw the sentry on guard in front of Major Pfeindorf's dugout. He was on the tracks, waving a stop signal with upraised Mauser. Sam grinned and beat his fist against the wide-open throttle.

"All right, Fritz; stick there if you want your toes mashed!" he cried.

A squad of Germans erupted from the dugout door. Sam recognized the Major among them. He reached over and picked up the shovel. The sentry abandoned his position just as the caboose rattled by. The train was rocking and jumping. Sam's hurled shovel caught the Major squarely across the mouth.

The End of the Line

AS THE train reeled on beyond Sam saw the Major pick himself up and wipe his hand across his livid face. Rifles snapped into place against gray-green shoulders and a swarm of bullets spanked along the steam chest, across the sill and along the sides of the boiler. Sam stuck the tip of his thumb against his nose and wriggled four fingers in the air.

Above the rattle and clang of the hurtling train Sam could hear the crash and burst of exploding shells. A Yank .75 burst not fifty yards from the track to the right. Another showered the cab with gravel and mud. Then the train charged through a barrage. The engine began reeling from side to side. Sam grabbed the brake lever and swung down. The pace sank and Sam threw the throttle wide again.

He stuck his head out as the curtain barrage was left behind. He saw a platoon of German soldiers straggling beside the track—headed toward the rear! He caught a glimpse of Maxim gunners pouring death down a shallow declivity. Horses pawed at the air as angry drivers lashed them ahead. Sam glanced down the track. His face paled. A hundred yards ahead he saw that the rails had been twisted up in the air by a shell burst! Shattered crossties hung from the twisted iron.

He cut steam and bore down on the brake lever. A shriek as the wheels locked. He yelled at the top of his voice: "Jump! Everybody. We're gonna CRASH!"

He clambered over the tender and dropped into the jolting gondola just in time to see Dawson, Son and Nason clamber up and disappear over the reeling side

walls. The car hit a terrific bump. Sam felt himself being carried bodily toward the rear. He slammed headlong into a wall. The car reeled up on end. A terrific series of crashes—a splintering and ripping of wood—the shriek of steel. His shoulder jolted heavily against loose earth. Something crashed with shattering impact along his neck and the back of his head. He hurtled into a black, vacuous pit . . .

He woke to the roar of a motor. He opened his eyes and glanced about him. Several men in khaki, others in black ponchos, were standing over him. He was lying on a cot and the roaring motor was close beside him. His eyes at length fastened upon a large red cross painted against a limestone wall. The roaring motor was shaking the flimsy sides of a field ambulance.

"Better put him in now," somebody said.

"Don't move him yet," said another voice. "Not until I've told him."

Sam saw the owner of the second voice. He was a tall, mustached fellow with a tanned face and with two or three stars on his overcoat. A general, probably. He moved his head wearily. There was something about a German uniform. Sure, that was Lieutenant Dawson dressed up like a Heinie sergeant! The train—the wreck—Captain Nason! The events of the morning flooded over him.

"Wheah is old Son, Lieutenant?" he asked presently.

"Gone to hospital. Same one you're going to, Sam," said the Lieutenant. "He's all right—or will be when they get through removing steel from his body. And you're all right, too. They set your shoulder while you were out."

Then the General started talking.

"Sam, they told the truth about you. The boys in your company called you the scufflin' fool! They're damned well right about it. We're going to hang all sorts of medals on you just to prove that you're the champion scuffler of the world! I want to thank you—or try to—for what you've done for me—for us. You gave me a son again—you recovered that map—and you brought that spy back to us!"

"Why, hell's bells, General," said Sam. "I'm sorry I tol' yo' the lieutenant was dead. Gawd knows, I thought he was!" Sam deliberated solemnly for a few seconds. General Dawson's handclasp was strong and steady. "I thought all of us was dead men—*several times*, sir."

NEXT MONTH

The true, inside story of the most astounding robbery in the history of crime—

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The Perfect Alibi

By MAX KOHLER
Vienna Press Correspondent

The charred body of a woman; her husband arrested for murder; and the story of how another woman's diary set him free by establishing a "perfect alibi."

THE old game park of Lainz, a suburb of Vienna, is an inviting place for love—and murder. Thousands of troths have been plighted there in the moonlight beneath the sheltering trees. Many a troth has been broken there beneath the same trees that had sheltered love. And it was there that one of the most fantastic and incredible of crimes was perpetrated.

On the night of this crime there was a perfect moon for lovesick couples who strolled in the refuge or lolled beneath the trees. But there came flashes of lightning, the rumble of thunder and threats of rain. The lovers fled in great haste but there were two who remained.

Suddenly a great light flared up as though a tree had been struck by lightning. There were eerie cries mingled with the sougling of the trees as the wind, forerunner of the storm, swept the woods. Then the storm broke and drenched the park.

The next morning a patrolman of the field police was ambling along the walks through the park. The storm had passed but limbs of trees had been blown down and when the officer stumbled he thought he had kicked a dead limb. Looking down, he stopped short.

He had stumbled across the terribly charred body of a girl. Her clothing was falling off in burned bits. Her body was distorted and her features charred beyond recognition. There was not a mark of identification on the body or the scorched bits of clothing that remained, I discovered on investigation.

Our first efforts were directed toward learning who the girl was. The officer who had discovered the corpse was inclined to believe that she was a victim of the storm; that she had been struck by a bolt of lightning or had been sheltered beneath a tree that was struck. Others of the police were inclined to the same theory.

But there was no other sign of lightning having struck nearby. And we found that there were bundles of partially burned straw near where the body was discovered. Then we found bits of alcohol cubes, which burn with an intense heat. These disclosures led to a more thorough examination of the body and the revelation of a bullet hole through the head.

Now all theories of accidental death were banished. We were convinced that there had been foul play. In reconstructing the murder we visualized this unknown girl, bound hand and foot and tortured as if at the stake. We were confident that a deliberate effort, frustrated only by the elements, had been made to cremate her body. The drenching rainfall had extinguished the flaming bundles of straw and the living torch that had been the girl.

Then began one of the most thorough of criminal investigations. It is seldom that slayers evade the authori-



Gertrude Koch took her diary to headquarters in an effort to prove Kellner innocent.

ties in or near Vienna. There is a system of criminal apprehension that is unrivaled anywhere in the world. But this system was helpless in solving the mystery of the torch murder in the game refuge of Lainz.

For months the police detectives tried to find some clue. They were unable even to determine the identity of the murder victim.

The Victim is Identified

A year passed and meantime I had been in many distant places and worked on various assignments. And the police detectives were called upon to handle other cases.

The game refuge mystery seemed destined to go down in history as unsolved.

The peasants of the district who had been shocked by the crime believed that the Almighty, himself, would eventually solve the mystery. Did He not send the rainfall which saved the body from destruction and so revealed the crime? Frankly, while the cynical detectives scoffed at this belief I was inclined to think that they might be right. As correspondent for newspapers in various parts of the world I have seen strange things happen. Therefore, it was with a sense of personal gratification that I learned of the next chapter in the mystery.

Detective Wahl, of the criminal police of Vienna, had a toothache. He visited his dentist. The dentist gossiped. He told the detective that he had recently visited the police museum out of curiosity and while there had seen a model of a set of teeth which he recognized.

The detective quizzed the dentist who made the startling statement that the model he recognized was a model of the teeth of the Lainz park murder victim.

He had done work on her teeth and recognized the fillings.

"Who is she?" the detective asked.

"Kitty Schaeftner, who for a time was housekeeper for my mother," the dentist replied; and with this revelation came the reopening of the investigation and subsequent startling disclosures.

Armed with knowledge of the identity of the torch murder victim Detective Wahl set to work with other officers and luckily I was assigned to the case again.

We started inquiries regarding her friends and associates. Primarily, we were looking for her lover. We were greatly surprised to learn that instead of one lover there had been many.

But first let me tell you something of Kitty Schaeftner's early life. She was an only child, the daughter of a very poor washerwoman of Budapest. Kitty had distinctly disliked her station in life. She was beautiful, even in her rags. Young men had told her so. She was not hard to convince. She wanted finery and jewels rather than drudgery and soapsuds.

There was no escape from her lot in life except through her beauty. So she drew upon her beauty and soon was the companion of a wide assortment of admirers. With cool discrimination Kitty selected men of wealth as her friends and through them she realized some of her ambitions.

Now the washerwoman's daughter had a wide selection of charming frocks which set off her comely figure. Gems sparkled on her fingers and encircled her lovely neck. Then the girl became more ambitious. She wanted a husband.

Among her most fervent admirers was Henry Fellner. He was the man of her dreams—handsome, immaculately groomed, wealthy and a free spender. She devoted herself and her charms exclusively to Fellner and they were married.

But still the girl found much to be desired. She had not found happiness. Fellner loved her, but also he loved travel and excitement and a score of distractions that took his attentions from his lovely bride. He longed for a love and romance that had not come with Kitty and he turned to Gertrude Koch, the wife of a German contractor.

Gertrude seemed to fulfill Fellner's craving. Whereas, Kitty was vivacious and spirited, he found Gertrude calm and soothing, a better balance for one of his temperament.

So Fellner and Gertrude planned to divorce their mates, marry each other and find happiness together.

Establishing an Alibi—

THESE are details which the investigation revealed. Believing that they had a complete case, the authorities began a search for Fellner. It was found that he had separated from Kitty after a row and had traveled to Abbazia, Italy, an Adriatic coast watering place. There he had been joined by Gertrude.

Fellner was arrested there, despite his fervent protestations of innocence. The detectives' theory was that the murder had been based on a dual motive: desire to be rid of Kitty so that he would be free to wed Gertrude, and his need for funds.

When confronted with the fact, that Kitty's body had been stripped of jewelry when found and that a short time after her death he had been flush with funds, Fellner declared he could prove that his funds came from other sources and contended staunchly that he had not been near the scene of the murder at the time of its commission.

Investigation disclosed he had derived funds from other sources but still the authorities held to their belief in his guilt.

It is at this point that this case becomes one of the most remarkable with which I ever came in touch.

Many of the continent's most experienced detectives have told me flatly that there can no more be a perfect alibi than there can be a perfect crime. Always, they say, there is a slip-up in calculations. Some minor item is overlooked in perpetrating the "perfect crime." The "perfect alibi," the detectives say, has never been offered. When an alibi is perfect, they declare, it is too complete for credence.

And yet, Fellner declared that he could establish an alibi. He was reluctant, however, to do so.

Here we have a picture of a brave woman. Gertrude Koch, her face pale, her hands trembling, worried over the possible fate of her lover, visited the police headquarters. There she produced her diary; one of the most intimate possessions of a woman.

There is probably no other combination of circumstances that could have made Gertrude reveal to other eyes her book of secrets. In this diary she had kept a detailed accounting of her movements for several years. There were notations of her meetings with the handsome Fellner. There were names, dates, records of the very hours of meetings and the places. The diary entries indicated that Fellner had been with Gertrude and far away at the time of that terrible occurrence in the game park.

But the detectives were still incredulous. They laughed at Gertrude's faith in her diary and her belief that it would clear her lover of guilt. The operatives began checking the items in the diary. Every notation was confirmed. There wasn't a single discrepancy. Not a weak point that they could attack. And there were incidents noted which it would have been impossible to falsify.

Gertrude had established the perfect alibi for her lover and he was given his freedom, absolutely cleared of any suspicion of guilt in the murder of his wife, Kitty. Had it not been for Gertrude's diary there is little doubt that the chain of circumstantial evidence forged by the detectives would have resulted in the prosecution of an innocent man.

And now, instead of languishing in prison, Fellner and Gertrude are married and sojourning in Japan. Another man, believed to have been an ardent admirer of the ambitious Kitty, is now held as her slayer.

Startling Escapes from Devil's Island

PROBABLY the most dramatic story of attempted escape from Devil's Island is that which ends at the guillotine at St. Laurent. This community houses perhaps the largest of the many penitentiaries in French Guiana, the land of banishment which has been called by many the land of the living dead.

The guillotine in this instance claimed the lives of four negroes. These men had been operating a trading schooner in the vicinity for a number of years. Every two months they put into the river at St. Laurent, ostensibly to transport lumber to Trinidad. But the regularity of the run aroused suspicion. The vessel was watched.

Then it developed that with every trip convicts were carried. Men able to muster enough money, either by stealing or some honest means, found that with five hundred francs they could purchase their freedom—for with that sum the negroes would agree to transport a man to Venezuela. Countless convicts took advantage of this offer, their friends tell.

But the surveillance of authorities was doubled when the negro ship began putting into St. Laurent every ten days. Business must have been good.

Then, one dark night, French officers surprised the negro crew twenty miles off shore in the very act of throwing to the sharks the bodies of twenty convicts they had ruthlessly murdered.

Even after the guillotine had done its work upon the admission of the men that they had killed in a similar manner more than a hundred convicts who paid their price for freedom, escapes continued.

The guillotine, of course, sometimes claims convicts too. There is one story ending there that well illustrates the greedy, animal-like desires of those condemned to Devil's Island. One of the prisoners, by hook or crook, had managed to collect 2,000 francs—a small fortune within the confines of those prison walls! Three cronies put their heads together, and then approached the man of wealth with a proposition of escape. The innocent victim agreed. The time was set. And then, when jungle trails were reached, the three plotters pounced upon the rich man with clubs and killed him. In their haste to acquire his wealth, one of the murderers hacked the victim's body nearly in two. But the body was found, and the men were captured.

All of them went to the guillotine.

This is a fate comparable perhaps only with banishment on Devil's Island itself. Almost from ancient times this peculiar instrument of torture has come. It is so horrible a means of capital punishment that even in the light of centuries of continued use it causes men to shudder at the very mention of it.

Convicted to die by the guillotine, a man must wait in solitary confinement until his sentence has been approved in France. Then he is given only a few minutes notice before being taken to the scene of his execution.

In examples like those cited in the foregoing, where more than one man is sentenced, the others must stand and watch the preceding victims beheaded.

The ceremony is a brief though bloody one. The accused person is lashed. Then his throat is fastened securely to

the lower half of a wooden circle which is quickly thrown into position. A button is pressed and the upper half of the circle descends, trapping the victim in the path of the swinging blade. This completed, the executioner presses another button that sends the fatal knife swinging with deadly precision straight for the victim's throat.

There is a swish, and the thud of a head falling into a basket provided for that purpose. Then quickly, for he is used to the task, the executioner reaches into the basket, grasps the head of the victim by the hair, raises it high so that all may see, and in a loud voice cries, "*Justice c'est faite!*" ("Justice is done!")

A Dragnet of Man-Hunters

OF COURSE, not all murderers suffer the guillotine. Many escape. Others die on jungle trials or at sea. But their mad flight makes room for another occupation in the colony: that of manhunter.

And as a business it's as lucrative as that of executioner, with perhaps less danger of poisoning. These man-hunters arm themselves with rifles and cutlasses, enlist the aid of one or two trail cutters or paddlers, and set out. By night they patrol the jungle streams, moving quietly, ever looking for the tiny fires that convicts almost invariably build with darkness to ward off prowling animals.

So it is that few escape the net.

The fate of those who remain in the colony can well be imagined from the foregoing. And as it is today, so it was before. In 1763 some 14,000 were sent to the colonies—and most of them perished. For awhile, only Arabs, Annamese, or other dark-skinned colonials were sent there, but later white men again flooded the place—the grist of French justice.

Thus gradually the place has become overcrowded, in spite of an apparent high mortality rate. One convict, now freed, has told how he was forced to live in a moldy cell with eighteen other prisoners. The cell was only fifteen feet square, and beds of canvas were arranged in tiers four deep.

Less wonder it is, then, that men who know nothing of sea or jungle would brave those treacherous fates in preference to a life of banishment on Devil's Island.

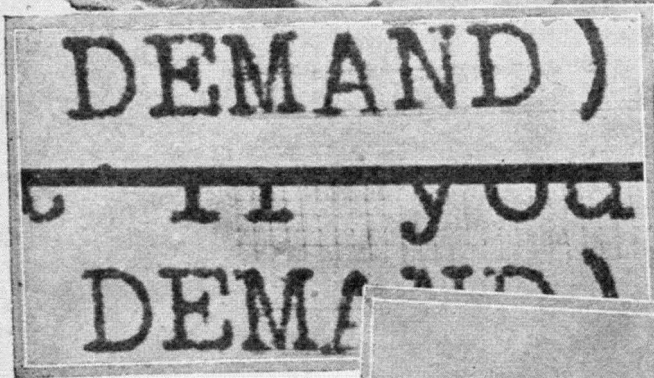
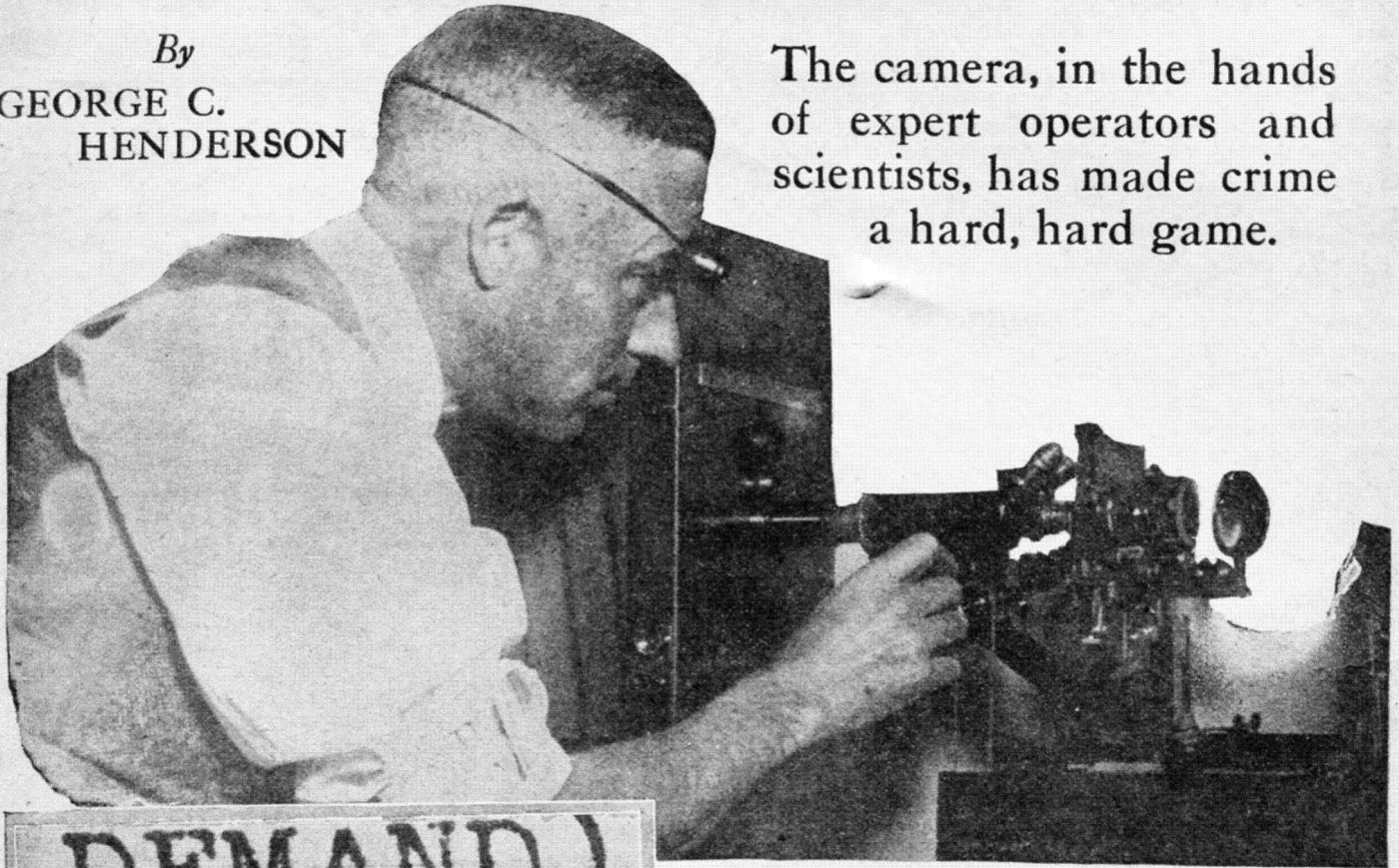
All these conditions have been brought to light since the famous Dreyfus case toward the latter part of the nineteenth century focused world-wide attention on the penal colony. Captain Dreyfus apparently framed for treason, was confined on the island of the little group off French Guiana then known as Devil's Island. It is the smallest of the three and until Dreyfus's imprisonment was the least known. Since the amazing expose that resulted in Dreyfus' pardon, the designation has applied to all the islands and to the mainland where the banished hordes are brought every year on the only convict ship in the world today.

Travelers who have been allowed to visit the convicts and to study their condition say that Devil's Island as a penal colony does not stand out as a glaring example of inhuman treatment or as an indictment of the French nation. They say rather that the colony offers a compact dramatization of overcrowded conditions and other evils that beset modern penal institutions the world over.

Photography, Crime's Enemy

By
GEORGE C.
HENDERSON

The camera, in the hands of expert operators and scientists, has made crime a hard, hard game.



A New York black-mailer was convicted through use of these photographic reproductions of typewritten notes.

“WHO is this man?”

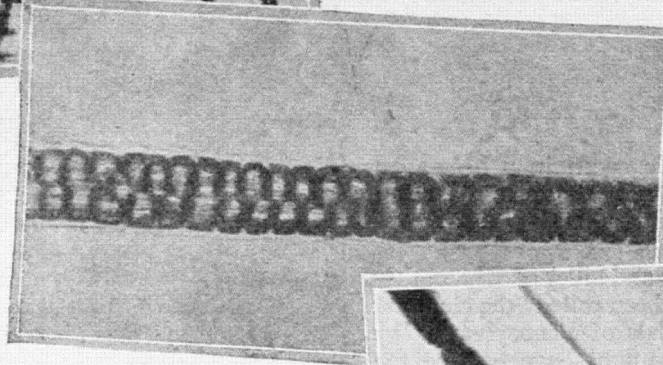
The picture of a dark-browed man of middle age with prominent nose and thin lips, looked out of the page of an Oakland, Cal., newspaper at its readers one evening. Above it in black lines was the question: “Who is this man?” Below the picture it said: “Anyone knowing the above pictured person please notify the Oakland Police Department, detective bureau.”

The fellow was a burglar who had been caught at a

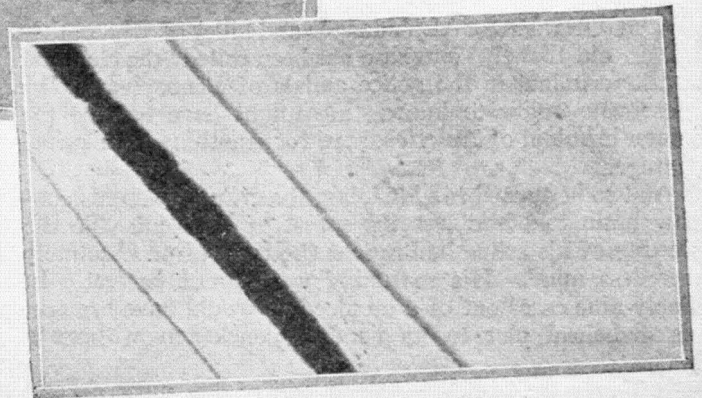
Captain C. D. Lee, of the Berkeley Police Department, focusing his apparatus to make a magnified photograph of a hair.

pawnshop trying to sell a silver service, stolen from the home of a prominent merchant. He bore no marks of identification and refused to give his name. His fingerprints were taken and the records searched in vain to identify him.

That evening an old couple appeared at the police station with the paper. “Why, this is our boarder!” they said. “We
(Continued on page 90)



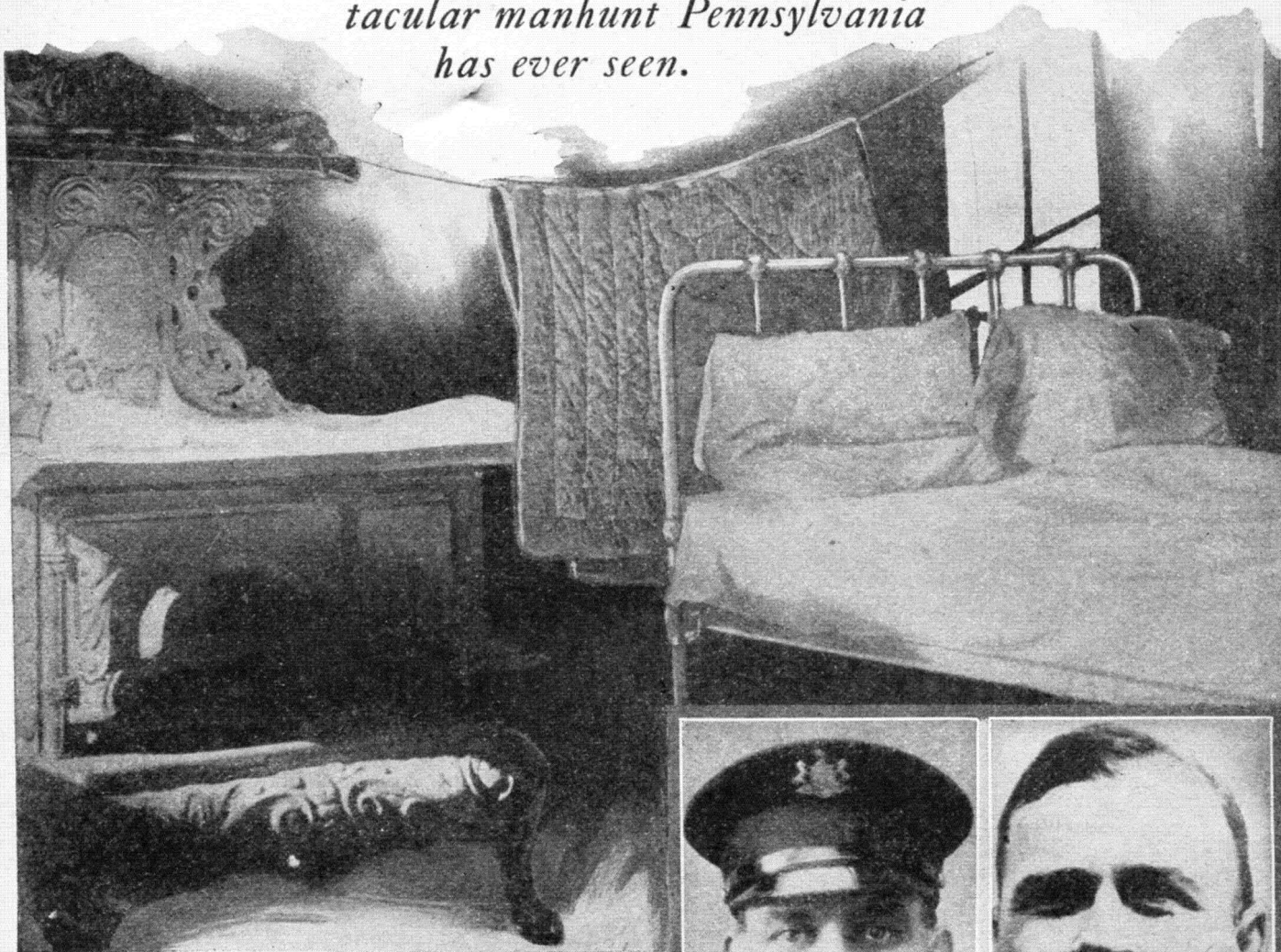
This magnified photo of a squirrel hair helped convict J. W. Brill of murdering his stenographer.



Brill was proved guilty by this microphotograph of a human hair found caught in his watch chain.

How the Coughlin

How the State Police outwitted the "cleverest criminal" and brought the kidnaper of little Blakely Coughlin to justice in the most spectacular manhunt Pennsylvania has ever seen.

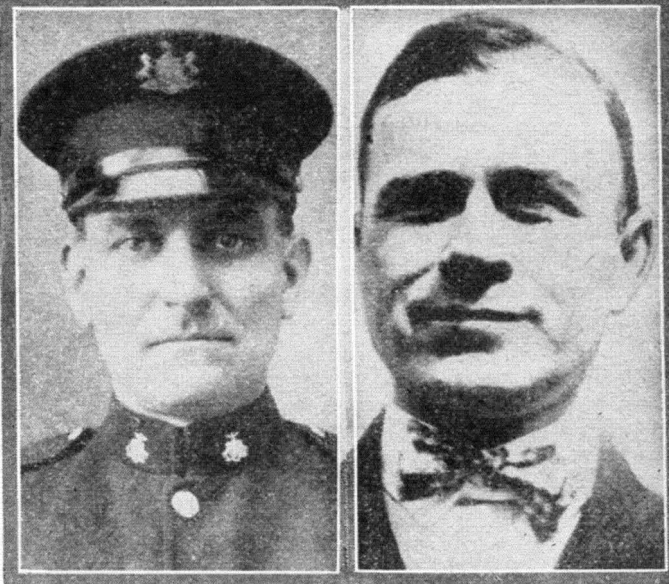


The interior of August Pascal's room in a house on Eighth Street, near Wood, in the old tenderloin section of Philadelphia.

AUGUST PASCAL, kidnaper and killer of 18-months-old Blakely Coughlin, has been called "the cleverest criminal in the police annals of Pennsylvania" by those who ought to know. He might have become the master criminal of America, save for one thing. He lacked courage.

And so he turned to kidnaping, the crime which his cunning brain told him was the safest of them all. To the plotting of his crime he brought the logic of an absolutely merciless mind. His reasoning was almost perfect. In ninety-nine cases out of a hundred he would have brought his diabolical plot to its fiendish conclusion without a hitch.

Two men . . . two men and one of the most perfect police organizations in the world . . . brought about Pascal's undoing. These two men, starting on the case

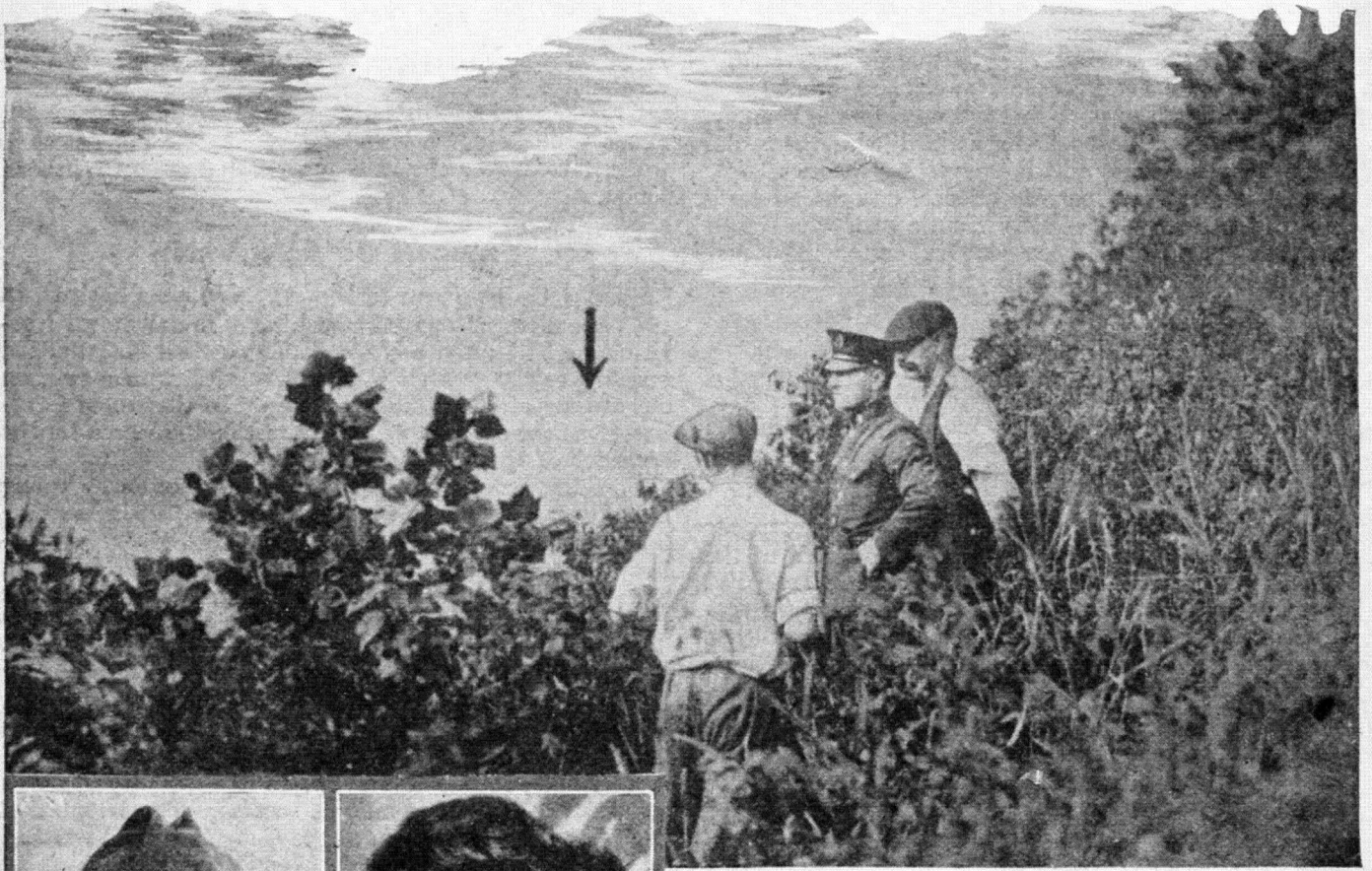


Major Lynn G. Adams, (left) superintendent of Pennsylvania State Police, and Captain Samuel W. Gearhart, who directed the hunt.

when the scent was more than two weeks old, stuck to it with dogged pertinacity for forty-seven days and finally ran their quarry to earth in the most spectacular capture of a criminal ever staged in Pennsylvania.

Kidnaper was Caught

By JOSEPH BALL



August Pascal, confessed kidnaper and slayer of Blakely Coughlin, (left) and the baby's mother, Mrs. George H. Coughlin.

The two men were Major Lynn G. Adams, superintendent of the Pennsylvania State Police, and Captain Samuel W. Gearhart, commander of "C" Troop of that organization.

Blakely Coughlin, baby son of Mr. and Mrs. George H.

Scene on the river near Norristown, Pa., where Pascal admitted sinking the body of his victim. While divers found a rail to which the infant had been tied, the body was not recovered.

Coughlin of Norristown, Pa., was kidnaped at 2:00 a. m., June 1, 1926. But it was not until June 16 that the State Police were called in on the case.

On the afternoon of June 16, Coughlin and his attorney, Jack Lazolere, journeyed to the state capitol at Harrisburg and told their story to Major Adams, pleading for his assistance. It was a tragic story they told; one of futile effort, petty jealousies, terrible suspicions and wasted money.

Briefly, the events in the Coughlin case up to the time it was placed before Major Adams, are as follows:

Mrs. Coughlin, at the Coughlin's summer cottage a few miles out of Norristown, was awakened at 2:00 o'clock the morning of June 1 by a cry from the nursery. She called her husband and the kidnaping of Blakely, their youngest son, was discovered almost immediately after it had taken place.

In spite of the fact that the criminal had only a few minutes start on them, posses of neighbors and police searched the underbrush and woods surrounding the house

all that night and the next day without success. Not a trace of Blakely or his kidnaper was found.

A ladder, stolen from a neighboring building, was found propped against the wall of the Coughlin house by a flower-box, and a laborer's coat, left on the same job, was missing. That was all.

Mr. Coughlin, although he was far from being a wealthy man, called in a private detective agency to aid the local police. The result was anything but helpful.

Shortly after the disappearance of Blakely, letters from blackmailers, cranks and people who claimed to have seen the lost baby began to pour in from all over the country. The Coughlin's mail was literally filled with them, demanding money, giving advice, suggesting theories.

Out of this mass of correspondence, one thread early began to stand out. The letters from a man who signed himself the "Crank" had the ring of truth. The first letter was received only a few days after the crime.

Demands For Money

THE Crank demanded \$6,000 for the return of the baby and promised to place Blakely in their hands within ten hours after receiving the money. He gave Coughlin three weeks to pay, saying that after that time had elapsed he would kill the child.

Mr. Coughlin was instructed to reply by a newspaper insertion. For a time, in accord with the advice of the police, Mr. Coughlin disregarded the Crank's letters. But finally, becoming discouraged with their lack of progress and determining to try to recover his son by any means whatever, Mr. Coughlin replied to the Crank's letter by a newspaper insertion asking for proof that he was in possession of the child.

The Crank replied, describing accurately and in detail, the nursery from which young Blakely had been kidnaped. Mr. Coughlin was convinced, and following the advice of numerous friends, decided to accede to the Crank's demands, who had now increased the ransom to \$12,000. This he was instructed to leave at a specified spot behind the trolley station at Swedetown, a few miles from Norristown. The baby would be returned in the small hours of the same night.

Mr. Coughlin, by now desperate over the safety of his son, raised the \$12,000 and left it at the specified spot on the night of June 14. The money disappeared but nothing happened. His baby was not returned.

The Coughlins by now were desperate. Money, about all they could raise, had been thrown away with no result. The police were accomplishing nothing. Every day that passed diminished the chances of ever recovering their son alive.

And just at this time an ex-soldier friend, one William Coulter, asked them why they hadn't gone to the State Police. Strangely enough, the idea had not occurred to either Coughlin or his attorney before. But now it was the last straw they could clutch in their forlorn hope. On the afternoon of June 16, they went to the state capitol and laid their case before Major Adams, asking the assistance of the State Police in recovering their child.

Several things convinced Major Adams of the Crank's cunning. First, he had chosen for his victims neither a very wealthy nor a very poor family. The very poor family would not have had enough money to make the crime pay and the very wealthy one would have hired hundreds of detectives to put on his trail, thus decreasing his chances of success. Second, the simplicity and directness with which the crime had been committed, leaving no

clews. And third, the diabolical cleverness of his letters.

So, on June 17, Major Adams and Captain Gearhart, to whom he had decided to entrust the case, journeyed to Norristown and looked over the ground. There wasn't much to start on. Everything that had happened on the night of June 1 was buried deep under a multitude of cross tracks.

But Captain Gearhart and Major Adams did not admit defeat so easily. "Get your man" was the motto of the force on which they served. Defeat was not in their vocabulary.

That night in Norristown these two men, both with minds trained to the keenest edge by constant detective work, talked over the case and decided on their line of action.

Troopers Get Into Action

THEN things began to happen. Captain Gearhart, in plain clothes, engaged a back room in downtown Norristown. The room had only one door and one window, opening to the south. It was furnished with a bed, an old dresser and two kitchen chairs. In that room Gearhart lived for the next 47 days, directing the search for the kidnaper of Blakely Coughlin.

Sometimes during one day a score of ordinary young men in civilian clothes would drift up to that little cubby hole where Gearhart sat. Behind closed door they delivered their reports, received their orders and departed. A telephone stood at Gearhart's elbow, and every time it jangled, a state trooper reported to his superior.

Gearhart was the center, the heart and brains of a network extending over the entire state of Pennsylvania. By June 18, one day after the state police took over the case, every trooper in that body was engaged in the hunt for the kidnaper.

For miles around Norristown the countryside was combed for any clue, without success. The letters and advice and threats that filled the Coughlin's mail were all carefully sifted. Thousands of miles were traveled by state troopers running down stories of babies found in all parts of the country. People wrote in from Texas, New England, Montana, Oregon and California. One trooper even traveled to Cuba on a false scent.

Neither Major Adams nor Captain Gearhart believed the child was alive. They believed that young Blakely had been smothered to death a few moments after his mother heard his cry of protest. But they hoped against hope.

On June 18, the newspapers printed in glaring headlines the story, "State Police Take The Coughlin Case." And, on June 20 the Crank broke his long silence and Mr. Coughlin received the following letter. He again demanded \$12,000 for the return of the baby.

"If you mean to play fair with me, as I think you did on the first payment . . . be at the B. & O. Railway Station, Twenty-fourth and Chestnut streets, Tuesday, June 22, and take the 2:44 o'clock train in the afternoon for Baltimore, Md. That's the express. When you see a white flag with a black cross in the middle, on your right side as you go, throw the money in a small bag out of the window and you will get your boy back before four a. m., Wednesday, June 23. Don't worry. Mr. Blakely is well."

Again the Crank manifested his shrewdness. He thought the state police would not dare to cross the state boundary.

There was a hurried conference between Adams and Gearhart, then Coughlin was given his instructions. "Coax him along. Take the train and throw off the bag when you see the flag. Put a letter in it saying that you haven't

had time to raise the money, that you want more proof."

Mr. Coughlin obeyed instructions to the letter and the state police made no attempt to interfere. However, troopers sent to the scene immediately afterward determined that one man, and only one, had done the errand.

Setting The Trap

AT LAST Gearhart and Adams felt they had something definite to work on. The Crank had demanded the planting of a parcel in a certain way. He had been obeyed and had escaped unseen. Why shouldn't he try it again?

That was exactly what Adams and Gearhart were planning on. It was their only chance to catch the Crank red-handed, for by now they were convinced the Crank was the criminal. On the night of June 22 the headquarters car rolled into Norristown and Adams went up to the little cubbyhole where Gearhart sat and waited. They talked till dawn.

Now it is all very well to know that a crook you are after will be somewhere on a fifty mile stretch of track at a given hour. It is another thing to set the trap for that crook and set it so cleverly that he will not suspect its existence.

Airplanes, dirigibles, automobiles, motorcycles, trains, all these and more were discussed by those two men that night. And finally they decided on a plan. They began elaborate preparations, carried on so quietly that, although more than a hundred men were involved, not a soul outside the State Police knew what was afoot.

The next morning, June 23, things began to happen. First went orders from headquarters at Harrisburg to the State Police training school at Newville that every available recruit be put into cross-country running, training for high speeds at distances from one and a half to two miles.

Next orders went to "A" Troop at Greensburg that Commissioner, a certain bloodhound, be brought over to "C" Troop in Pottsville, attended by his trainer, Sergeant John J. Russell.

Further, Major Mair, deputy superintendent of the Force, took the first train for Philadelphia, where he conferred with his old A. E. F. chief, General Atterbury, then vice president of the Pennsylvania railroad. Vice-president Ewing, of the Reading railroad, also was interviewed.

As a result, Major Adams was assured that, at a moment's notice, for any train on any road leading out of Philadelphia, a train consisting of an engine, two baggage cars and a combination, would be substituted, the regular train to follow at an interval to be specified by Major Adams.

At the same time the newspapers were given to understand that the State Police had dropped the Coughlin case, due to a quarrel with Mr. Coughlin brought about by his treating with the Crank without their knowledge.

Now began a period of watchful waiting. If only they could stall the Crank until they were ready to act. On one pretext or another Coughlin put the man off.

Finally, on July 29, Coughlin received a letter from the Crank stating flatly that unless he received the ransom by August 2, the child would never be seen alive again.

The final act in the drama could be delayed no longer. Mr. Coughlin was instructed to reply by a newspaper insertion telling of his willingness to deal.

"What if the Crank should telephone?" Adams asked. "That wouldn't leave us much time to work in."

"We'll cut the wires," said the resourceful Gearhart. "Then he'll have to write."

The Crank Takes The Bait

ON Friday, July 30, Coughlin received the following letter, which he carried immediately to Gearhart in his box-like room.

"I tried to get you on the phone today, but you must have been out because I could get no answer . . . This is going to be your last chance to get him back. We go halfway with you, \$6,000 in cash and the rest in check, on condition that you will not stop payment on those check after you get the boy, because they might get one of us when he go to cash the check but the rest of us will get you.

"Use the Reading Ferry at Chestnut Street and get the Atlantic City train that leave Camden at 2:10 and sit on your right as you get on the train and keep a good watch out of the window on your right and when you see a white flag throw the bag out of the window. Because it depend on us. If we get the money, you get the boy. If we don't you don't . . . We are not going to keep him any longer. Too risky. Get the 2:10 train from Camden on Monday, August 2nd. I guarantee that your boy will be home August the 3rd before 4 a. m.

"If you don't pay I might just as well say goodbye to your boy for you."

The Crank had swallowed the bait, hook, line and sinker! Gearhart shot the news on to Harrisburg, rose, stretched himself, and walked out of his prison for the first time in six weeks.

The next morning in Philadelphia, three men boarded a dinky local on the Reading line for Atlantic City, via Camden. They were Major Adams and Captains Gearhart and Wilson Price, of the State Police.

Four times that morning they traveled over the fifty miles of track between Camden and Atlantic City, making notes, mapping the country in their minds as only experienced scouts knew how to do.

That afternoon and evening in a hotel in Philadelphia, they discussed their findings. That whole fifty miles of track was divided into eighteen zones, varying in length from seven-eighths of a mile to five miles, some wooded, some swampy, some hilly.

Then they were confronted with a problem. How many men would it take to cover thoroughly those eighteen zones? Starting at seventy men, the figure climbed until it reached a hundred and ten. That ended it. A hundred and ten men to form a net for one criminal!

Then, on the morning of Sunday, August 1, Troops B, C and E, these being the easternmost troops, received orders to send in their quotas.

"Plain clothes. Men will not wear their best. Report to Veterans of Foreign Wars hall in Philadelphia." So the order ran.

And without waiting for dinner, the troopers chosen hurriedly changed their clothes and departed, leaving their troop headquarters in ones and twos to avoid attracting attention. Calls were sent to sub-stations, and from points all around Philadelphia, keen-eyed young men, dressed in civilian clothes, might have been seen boarding trolleys, buses, trains, all leading to Philadelphia.

Among the first to come in that afternoon were twelve men who were reserved for a special task, for which they were chosen because of their knowledge of woodcraft and scouting. Late that afternoon, led by Captain Price, they boarded a local for Atlantic City. Not all together, but by ones and twos at various stations.

At the beginning of the first zone out of Camden, Price motioned to the first man, and he quietly dropped off the train. And so again at the beginning of the second zone, and the third and the fourth, until finally the last of the twelve had been dropped.

By that time dusk was falling and it had begun to rain. But those twelve men did not seek cover. Theirs was the vital job of scouting out the lay of the land, learning exactly the topography of each zone, so they could report it to the commander of the squad covering that zone next morning.

Much of the territory between Camden and Atlantic City is swamp. Into that swamp the twelve plunged, and were soon lost to human ken. All night they floundered through dense undergrowth, often in water up to their waists, pushing through mud, brambles, rubbish, learning every physical feature of their zones.

And when morning finally came, each man was at his post, waiting to give his zone commander an exact picture of the country over which he was to dispose his force.

Meanwhile, back in the hall in Philadelphia, the remainder of the hundred and ten had gathered. Major Adams assigned them to zones, picked zone commanders, and gave them their final instructions.

Early the next morning, the local to Atlantic City, never in much of a hurry, began to loiter even more than usual. It stopped at places where it had never stopped before, little out-of-the-way stations in the heart of the swamp. And at each stop two or three, or four or five nondescript young men dropped off, glanced about, and disappeared into the woods.

And so during the whole ride to Atlantic City. By ninety-three on the morning of August 2, every man was in position. A cordon of men whom nothing could stop was drawn around that fifty mile stretch of track which formed a giant trap to catch one criminal.

It was two-nine in Camden station. A plain little train . . . just an engine, three old baggage cars and a combination. . . slid over the track.

The little train lurched out of Camden station, at 2:10, exactly on the schedule of the Express. But as soon as the outskirts of the town were behind a strange thing happened. The dingy train began to gather speed. Faster and faster it clicked along, until the rails were flying beneath it. Fifty miles an hour that deceptive train went, and all the time out of its funnel belched a dense cloud of black smoke, for the fireman was stoking green coal, according to Major Adams' orders.

Playing The Cards

AND IN that one combination, what do we see? Eleven men . . . Gearhart, two postal inspectors, Sergeant Russell, and six lean young men, picked runners from the State Police training school at Newville. Between Sergeant Russell's knees crouched Commissioner, the best bloodhound owned by the force.

Adams sat in the cab, tense as an eagle wheeling high in the sky on the lookout for prey.

Back in the combination, Gearhart manipulated a pack of cards, each with a number on it. It had been agreed that the men in each zone watch the window of the little train. If that window was blank, it would mean the Crank was further ahead. If, on the other hand, it showed the number of the zone behind, they were to run back and surround that zone.

So Gearhart fingered his pasteboards, slipping one to the back of the pack each time a zone slipped past. Zone 1 flew by. Zone 2—3—4. Still no sign of a white flag. The minutes sped by, lengthening into an hour. The puffing little train screeched through Egg Harbor, the station which marked the beginning of Zone 13.

Suddenly Gearhart stiffened in his seat. There, between two trees, hung a sheet . . . the white flag! The

train whizzed by, enveloped in a dense cloud of black smoke. Gearhart slipped the white card bearing the number thirteen into the window, and the trap was sprung!

A mile and a half beyond the spot where the flag was hung, the little engine slowed down. To an observer near the flag, its slackening of speed would not have been apparent due to the smoke.

Nevertheless, in that second it slowed, eleven men leaped to the ground. The six runners set off down the tracks, covering the ground in the long, swiftness of trained distance men. Gearhart and Adams plunged into the brush and disappeared, together with the two postal inspectors. Russell and Commissioner started off after the runners.

And now to switch back for a moment to the spot where that white flag was shown. As the dinky little train thundered by, belching its dense clouds of smoke, a man's head and shoulders rose cautiously out of the underbrush and peered down the track. The man looked at his watch, evidently puzzled, for the Express should be along by rights. Then in the distance a train whistled. The man ducked down again and in a few seconds the Express roared by, two minutes late.

As it passed the flag, an arm appeared from a window and a package was thrown to the ground. Then the train was gone.

Another minute and the man emerged from his hiding place, glanced about, and then walked confidently up to the package. As he climbed the railroad embankment, the woods were a hundred yards behind him. He reached the package, looked down at it, and scratched his head, as if puzzled. For a moment he stood there undecided.

A sound caught his ear and he turned to stare down the track where the Express had disappeared. Men, running! He turned like a startled deer and raced for the bushes. . . and ran squarely into the arm of Private Gecelosky. The Crank was caught!

It would have been the same no matter which way he turned. Down the track from one side came the six runners. From the other, the contingent from Zone 12 raced to be in at the capture. And behind him in the woods were the detail assigned to Zone 13, who had watched his every move for over an hour.

As a little group of men gathered about the captured prisoner, Sergeant Russell and Commissioner, the bloodhound, arrived on the scene. Russell led the dog immediately to the sheet, which the men on Zone 13 had had orders not to touch. Giving Commissioner the scent from the makeshift flag, he turned him loose.

The Bloodhound Acts

THE dog immediately was off, nose to the ground. Over to a pile of ties, up on the embankment, then into the swamp the trail led. Then, straight as a die, Commissioner headed for the group of men. Cleaving straight through them, he sprang up with his forepaws on the prisoner's chest and bayed. The last link in a perfect chain clicked into place.

A few minutes later Adams and Gearhart arrived on the scene. After receiving outline reports from the men, the two, with the prisoner and one trooper, made their way back through the brush to a waiting car. Captain Price and Bill Coulter were sitting in the front seat. In the back was a United States postal inspector.

The prisoner was loaded in. At Egg Harbor, they ran into trouble. The inhabitants of the village, seeing a dozen rough-looking men from Zone 12 hurrying down the track,

(Continued on page 92)

Muscles 5c apiece!

WOULDN'T it be great if we could buy muscles by the bag—take them home and paste them on our shoulders? Then our rich friends with money to buy them sure would be socking us all over the lots.

But they don't come that easy, fellows. If you want muscle you have to work for it. That's the reason why the lazy fellow never can hope to be strong. So if you're lazy and don't want to work—you had better quit right here. This talk was never meant for you.

I Want Live Ones

I've been making big men out of little ones for over fifteen years. I've made pretty near as many strong men as Heinz has made pickles. My system never fails. That's why I guarantee my work to do the trick. That's why they gave me the name of "The Muscle Builder."

I have the surest bet that you ever heard of. Eugen Sandow himself said that my system is the shortest and surest that America ever had to offer.

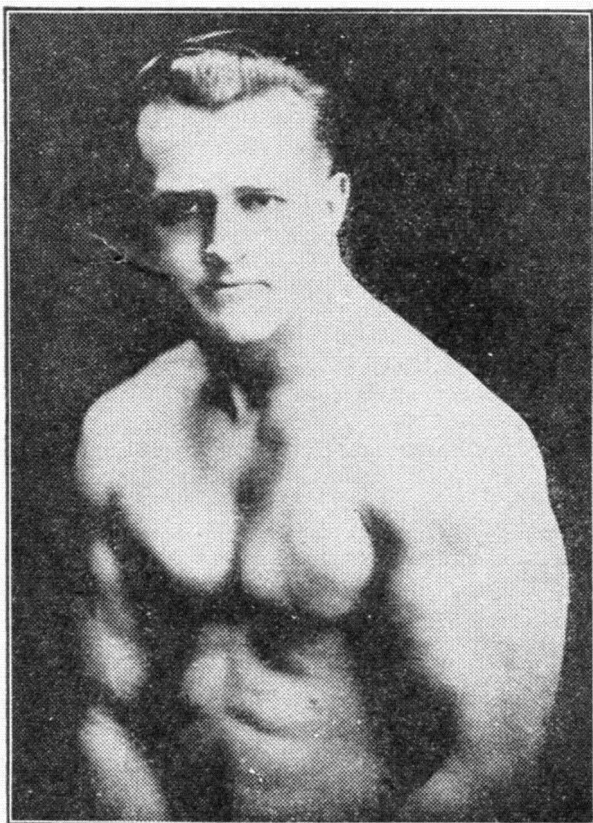
Follow me closely now and I'll tell you a few things I'm going to do for you.

Here's What I Guarantee to Do for You

In just 30 days I'm going to increase your arm one full inch. Yes, and add two inches to your chest in the same length of time. But that's nothing. I've only started; get this—I'm going to put knobs of muscles on your shoulders like baseballs. I'm going to deepen your chest so that you will double your lung capacity. Each breath you take will flood every crevice of your pulmonary cavity with oxygen. This will load your blood with red corpuscles, shooting life and vitality throughout your entire system. I'm going to give you arms and legs like pillars. I'm going to work on every inner muscle as well, toning up your liver, your heart, etc. You'll have a snap to your step and a flash to your eye. You'll feel the real pep shooting up and down your old backbone.

You'll stretch out your big brawny arms and crave for a chance to crush everything before you. You'll just bubble over with vim and animation.

Sounds pretty good, what? You can bet your old ukulele it's good. It's wonderful. And don't forget, fellow—I'm not just promising all this—I guarantee it. Well, let's get busy, I want some action—So do you.



EARLE LIEDERMAN, The Muscle Builder
Author of "Muscle Building," "Science of Wrestling and Jiu Jitsu," "Secrets of Strength," "Here's Health," "Endurance," Etc.

Send For My New
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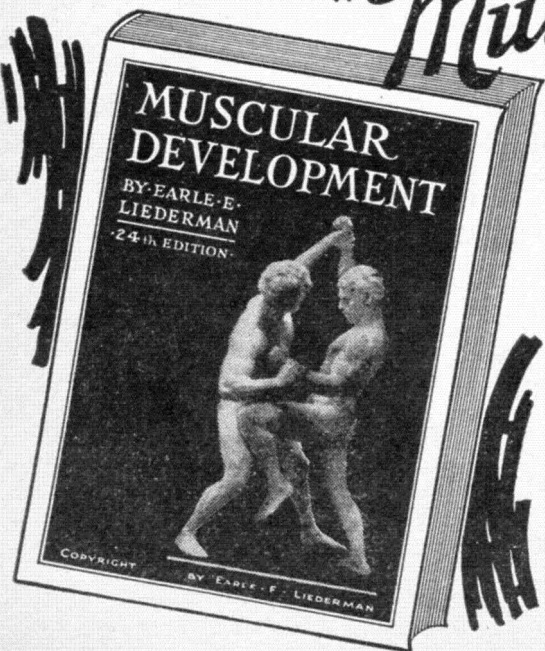
Do you get that? It's free. I don't ask a cent. It's yours with my compliments. Take it and read it. It's the peppiest piece of literature you ever flashed your glimmers on. And 48 full-page photos of myself and some of my numerous prize-winning pupils. This is the finest collection of strong men ever assembled into one book—look them over—doctors, lawyers, merchants, mechanics, and every line of trade you can think of. I swear you'll never let this book get out of your mitts again. And just think—you're getting it for nothing. Don't hesitate—no strings attached to it. Grab it.

Take your pen or pencil and fill out the coupon, or even your name and address on a postal card will do—do it now before you turn this page.

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Dear Sir:—Please send me absolutely free and without any obligation on my part whatsoever, a copy of your latest book, "Muscular Development." (Please write or print plainly.)

Name Age.....

Street

City State.....

Photography, Crime's Enemy

(Continued from page 83)

wondered what had become of him." In a concealed panel in his room they found a burglar's outfit and a revolver. They traced the serial number on the revolver and thus learned his identity.

Photography is used by detectives and police departments, to record fingerprints, to preserve the scene of a crime, for pictures in identification circulars, to show wounds and illustrate the position of a body in murder cases, for magnified photos or photo-micrographs to present microscopic evidence to juries, and for X-ray pictures.

In almost every phase of scientific crime detection, photography plays a part. In one instance the California state criminologist assembled the pictures of twenty members of a safe-cracking gang and distributed copies widely in a desperate effort to put an end to the many yegg jobs. Tips came pouring in from people who recognized the faces and soon the gang was broken up.

Jules Tourneau was murdered with a knife in his hunting tent. Joe Stager, a trapper, was arrested nearby and held when bloodstains were found on his shirt and on the handle of his hunting knife. Stager asserted that he had been killing frogs for their hind legs, which he ate. A blood identification expert made photographs of the blood corpuscles magnified 500 times, on Stager's knife and proved they really were from a frog. Stager was released.

A prominent physician in New York received a number of threatening letters, demanding money. The doctor turned the letters over to the police. They were typewritten on ordinary paper and mailed from various parts of the city. A discharged employe was suspected. It was discovered that he had used a typewriter in a free employment bureau to write some applications for jobs. The police suspected he had used this machine to type the blackmailing letters. A criminologist made magnified photographs of writing done on the employment agency machine and of that on one of the blackmailing notes. The magnified prints proved that the blackmail demands were written on the suspected machine. This evidence presented in court led to a conviction.

Photo-micrographs of hair solved the Brill murder mystery case. J. W. Brill was charged with slaying his stenographer, Ellen Martin. All the evidence was circumstantial except one concrete clue. Bits of hair caught in Brill's watch chain were found to be covered with blood.

Brill, who was a sportsman, contended he had been hunting squirrels and that those hairs had caught in the chain when he was cleaning them. The police contended that the hair was that of a human being.

Captain C. D. Lee, of the Berkeley police department, made magnified photographs of the hair on the chain by reflected light. Hair being nearly transparent, offers but slight resistance to photography. The pictures showed the disputed hair to be that of a human being. For purposes of comparison Captain Lee also made a micro-photo-graph of a squirrel hair. This did not resemble in the least the hairs found in the watch chain. Brill's defense was broken down and he finally confessed.

In one instance X-ray photography was used to save an innocent man from prison. He was charged with shooting a man with his .45-calibre revolver. X-rays showed that the bullet was a .32 and the innocent man was released.

Some of the uses of photography in criminology are amusing. One can imagine the surprise of a negro when a flash of powder burst forth just as he was opening the drawer of a cash register. He fled. But his surprise was still greater the next day when the police came for him.

"Ah never done nothin'," he protested earnestly. "Whuffo yo' all gwine arrest me fo, Misto Officer?"

The next instant his eyes bulged out and his jaw dropped when the policeman produced a picture of Mose standing before the cash register with his hand on the drawer. The explosion had been that of flashlight powder. A concealed camera had taken the culprit's picture.

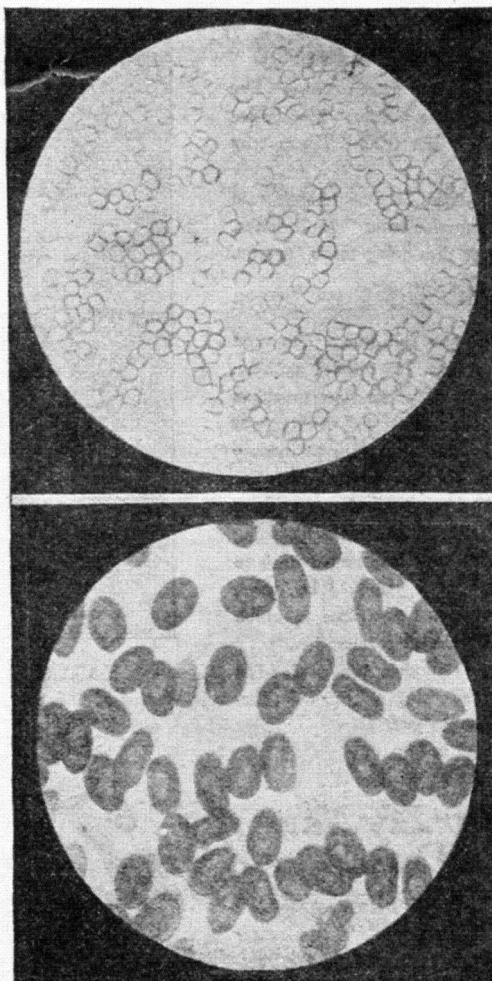
There have been countless other instances in which photography has played a stellar role in the solution of crimes that, without the use of the camera, would have presented hopeless problems.

Among the cases which have attracted nation-wide attention was the notorious Loeb-Leopold affair in Chicago. The thrill slayers of the little Franks boy used a typewriter to prepare their ransom notes to the child's parents. Once more a comparison of letters proved valuable in the running down of the guilty persons.

Fingerprinting, of course, is becoming more and more important in combatting crime. So general has become the use of this valuable medium of detection that almost every police department, even to the small towns of the nation, has its fingerprint expert and its file of pictures.

While crooks generally are becoming wiser in covering their trails, the progress that has been made in recent years by those whose business it is to detect crime, has made the life of the criminal anything but easy. And the camera is playing a larger role each day. It frequently is able to picture objects which are not visible to the human eye.

And, strangely enough, photography as it is used in the detection of crime, is as valuable to the innocent as it is deadly to the guilty. In countless instances it has been known to prove the innocence of suspected persons who, without its aid, might have been obliged to serve long years in prison or even to pay the supreme penalty.



These photographs of a frog's blood, above, and of the red corpuscles of a human, below, magnified 500 times, proved Joe Stager, a trapper, innocent of the Jules Tourneau murder.

The Chief's Chair

(Continued from page 13)

\$900 was the sum total of their booty. When caught in Florida whence they fled they were broke. They plan to start life anew together with a capital of \$1,100 which Cecelia earned by writing her life story for a news feature syndicate. Having learned in a tragic school that crime does not pay they plan to live on the up and up. They will enter the garage business.

Auto in Crime

NINETY percent of those committing crime in New York escape punishment for the reason that they escape capture, according to Joseph V. Gallagher, New York city court justice and former assistant district attorney. The automobile and the swift escape it affords criminals is his explanation of that condition. He points out that robbery and its attendant crimes are the only crimes particularly on the increase and in them the automobile is an almost inevitable adjunct. He cites that crime on Staten Island, from which there is but one easy way to leave, and that by ferry, has shown no increase.

This theory as to the cause of the increase in crime, carried to its logical length, might mean a future prohibition of the ownership or use of automobiles by those with criminal records. Criminally careless drivers are denied auto licenses; only reputable citizens may purchase firearm silencers and in several states it is a felony to carry a pistol without a permit.

The Complete Life

AN ARCHITECT who several years ago was awarded the contract for building an addition to the Idaho state prison requested the warden provide him a list of the building tradesmen among the convicts. When he scanned the list, he demanded, "Where are the carpenters?"

"We have no carpenters here and never have had," the warden answered. "Carpenters seem not to commit crimes."

The explanation seems to be that carpenter work provides a full expression, a complete vent for everything that is inside a man that demands an outlet to bring him into a full life. It requires initiative, methodical, far-seeing brain work

and before the day's work is ended a full measure of muscular exertion without excessive fatigue, so that he can eat and enjoy a full evening meal and revel in a night's sleep.

No repression, no complex can well store up in him. His life day after day is ideal for mental and physical health. Crime is quite remote from him.

The U. S. A. Rabble

SOCIOLOGISTS and historians profess to see a great national danger in the horde of illiterate, vicious and criminal habitues of the slum districts of our great cities who are controlled and utilized by crooked politicians. Their directed votes put corrupt and incompetent officials into office and students of the social sciences see

in them every conspicuous characteristic of the Roman rabble that was in at the death of that nation.

Official Lawlessness

GURNEY E. NEWLIN, president of the American Bar Association, has felt it incumbent upon him to plead for law enforcement by lawful methods.

"The resort to lawlessness in enforcing or seeking to enforce the law almost tends to become habitual," he warned the association at its annual convention in Memphis. "There is no greater incentive to lawlessness than for the government, in the enforcement of one law, to violate another."

Mr. Newlin scored illegal search and seizure in violation of constitutional rights and cited the fact
(Continued on page 95)

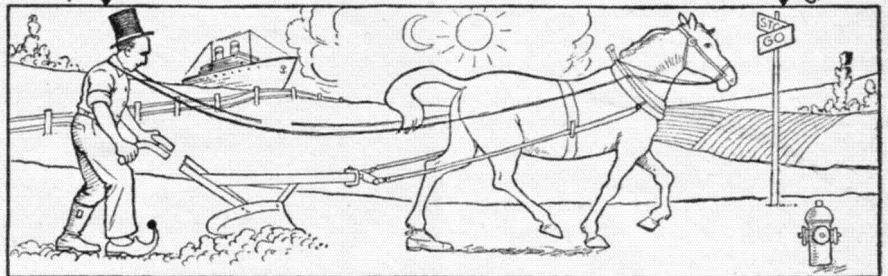
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THERE ARE A NUMBER OF MISTAKES IN THE DRAWING The artist has made them purposely. How many of them can you find? Look at the picture—surely there are some queer things about it. There are objects in the picture which do not belong there, and there are mistakes in some of the objects that do belong there. Look carefully. If you can find at least seven mistakes your answer will be acceptable. You may mark the mistakes on the picture and send it to me or tell me what they are in a letter or on a post card. Rush your answer today for an opportunity to win one of the

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	30x5.25	2.95 1.35	32x4.75	3.20	1.45
	31x5.25	3.20 1.35	33x4.75	3.20	1.45
	30x5.77	3.20 1.40	34x4.75	3.45	1.45
	32x5.00	3.20 1.40	30x5	3.60	1.75
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How the Coughlin Kidnaper Was Caught

(Continued from page 88)

had attempted to stop them. They had not succeeded. Now they stopped the car, and demanded by what right they could take their prisoner out of the state. Then Adams' wisdom in taking along the postal inspector became apparent.

"This man is my prisoner and belongs to the federal government," the man spoke up. The local sheriff was silenced, and the car sped on.

The trap prepared by Adams and Gearhart had been sprung. There had not been a hitch. Everything had moved with the precision and secrecy that only a perfectly trained organization can give. The trap had sprung, and its jaws had closed on one August Pascal, later convicted kidnaper and murderer.

Another story could be written on the way these same two men gradually worked out of Pascal the evidence they needed to convict him. But that would take too long. Suffice it to say that they used every device possible in wringing a confession from Pascal, without ever resorting to physical violence.

For Pascal, from the first, maintained his innocence. He was an accomplished liar. As the state police disproved one story, he invented another. He admitted writing the letters to Coughlin when they unearthed a spoiled copy of one of them that he had thought safely burned. But he said another man had planned the kidnaping and now had the child.

When the state police proved that story false, he invented another. But all the time the net was drawing closer. For instance, a slip of paper bearing such letters and figures as these was found in Pascal's lodging:

JP 45 BW 1000 JPP 5-7 PP 1500, etc.

The Criminal Identification bureau revealed the fact that Pascal had been arrested previously under various aliases, such as John Pierre Pons, Julius Pons and Harvey Williams. From this information, and the aforementioned cryptogram, the astute Gearhart evolved a theory. He went to New York and put it to the test and it proved correct.

He found, for instance, that one Julius Pons had deposited in the bank at Forty-fifth Street and Broadway, \$1,000; that John Pierre Pons had deposited in the bank at 5 and 7 Park Place, \$1,500. In this way, all but \$1,000 of the \$12,000 paid over by Mr. Coughlin, was recovered.

VARIOUS means failed to get Pascal to talk. Gearhart and Adams proved their theory of the commission of the crime by a word test. By this method, the prisoner is read a long list of words, and after each one is to answer with the word that first occurs to his mind.

Of course the prisoner thinks the catch is in the word he answers with, whereas it is really in the time taken to answer. They read to Pascal a list of fifty harmless words, timing him with a split-second stop watch to discover his true reaction time. Then they started the real test. To "crime," after an over-long hesitation, Pascal answered "stealing." He stumbled again on ladder and flower and box. He had used a flower-box to prop the ladder against the Coughlin home.

But still Pascal refused to talk. Finally, they tried silence. For days and days Pascal was allowed no news of the outside world. A silent trooper stood on guard before his door, but refused to answer his questions. The man grew desperate, finally broke down. He began confession, not to the kidnaping of Blakely Coughlin, but to other crimes.

His jailers listened unmoved, and finally, on October 10, Pascal confessed to the kidnaping and murder of little Blakely Coughlin.

The next day, with Gearhart at his side, he retraced his steps on that fateful night of June 1, finally showing where, after the baby had been smothered to death, he had tied it to a rail and thrown its body in the river. Divers the next day recovered the rail, with the cords at each end. Of the body, nothing was left.

On November 20, Judge A. S. Swartz sentenced Pascal to twenty years in prison for second degree murder and life imprisonment for kidnaping, openly lamenting the freak of the law that made it impossible for him to impose the death sentence. The Pennsylvania law making murder committed in connection with a felony first degree murder was passed before kidnaping was made a felony.

Strangely, Pascal lamented it too. "I want to be electrocuted," he complained.

"Because," said Gearhart, "he is jail-wise. He knows that his life in prison will be made a curse to him by his fellow prisoners. Even the most confirmed black-leg revolts from a baby killer."

And once more the futility of crime was demonstrated.

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By Deputy Sheriff Probasco

In The APRIL Issue!

Trapping the Lenox Burglars

(Continued from page 70)

and to say about the incident to anybody at all to the Kinsellas, and judging by the character of the man I felt pretty sure he would obey.

Ready for the Climax

NOW, at last, the loose ends were beginning to fit together, and matters moved forward with a rush. Thanks to the excellent descriptions already in our hands, we had little difficulty in "planting" for Tom Kinsella and recognizing him when he came out of the house where he lived. From that time he was shadowed until he met his pals, Fitzpatrick and Mahoney, who also were recognized from the descriptions.

All three of these men were then watched continually by Pinkerton operatives, and it was not many days before they were found in company with the fourth member of the gang, who turned out to be a yegg known by the name of Sherlock. Perhaps a sense of irony had led him to assume that name.

We now had enough "on" these men to confirm our own suspicion, but not sufficient to ensure a conviction in a court of law should they be arrested. Therefore we judged it best to continue shadowing them in the belief that they would soon give us a chance to take them red-handed.

In this we were not disappointed. Before many days passed they boarded the boat one evening for Bridgeport.

Arriving there about nine o'clock they were followed to the residential section of the city. There our men lost track of them, but an alarm was given and the local police responded with extra vigilance.

At about two o'clock in the morning a burglary was attempted at the residence of a Mr. Wheeler. It was detected and the house surrounded. In the running fight that ensued, Fitzpatrick was killed by the police, and Kinsella and Mahoney were taken into custody. Sherlock got away.

Even now it is not easy to connect these men definitely and positively with the Lenox and Stockbridge crimes. I had a special motive in wanting to do so, because I had not forgotten Willard King still behind bars in the county jail. So when all others had failed to elicit a confession from either of the prisoners I took a hand.

Kinsella was obdurate, but in

Mahoney I detected a chord that would respond to sympathy and kind treatment. He and Kinsella were sentenced each to fifteen years at Weathersfield for their parts in the Bridgeport "job."

I rode up there on the train with them. Before we reached the prison, Mahoney turned to me and said: "You are the first man who has said a decent word to me in the last ten years. Now I am going to tell you everything there is about this job, and a lot of other things you never heard of." The result was one of the most valuable confessions a detective ever received.

Not long after this the net closed on Sherlock. I took him to Lenox and had him identified by Dr. Governor and others. King was completely exonerated and set free.

Sherlock was sent to prison for nineteen years, and is out again.

All this resulted from a strong family resemblance being noticed by a shrewd old Irishwoman who did not want to talk.

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THE VOICE OF SOUND PICTURES Screen secrets Magazine

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Colleen Moore announces her plans for the future, the latest news about John Gilbert—Ina Claire romance in "Let Us Stay Married!" and a host of intimate personality stories about Anita Page, Lois Moran, William Powell, and other screen stars.

Other March features include: Latest news of First National Pictures—SCREEN SECRETS great Free-Trips-To-Hollywood contest, reviews of the latest screen attractions, Harry Carr's Private Line, and other departments containing the latest news from Hollywood.



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that the [redacted] against arrest without warrant. The invasion of a home without a search warrant goes back to the Magna Charta and has had the support of English speaking peoples for ages. Likewise he censured third degree methods of the police, in which some police officials appoint themselves judge, jury and jailer in trying to secure confessions from suspects.

Those who talk loudest about "loyalty" to the constitution are sometimes the very ones who are quickest to violate the constitution in their zeal to enforce one small part of it.

Boys Worst Criminals

THE average age of bandits now serving terms in Sing Sing prison is nineteen years, announces Warden Louis E. Lawes. He says that most of the stickups in which guns are used, are by fellows between 17 and 22 years of age.

Which leads to the question: What has become of the old fashioned crime and prison-hardened criminal? Is he locked up for life as a fourth offender? Door-tender at a speakeasy? Lookout for a mob? Police snitch? Or is he peddling shoestrings?

Prison Riots Echo

QUICKENED by its prison riots, New York state has set about solving the problems ascribed by experts as causing them. To date Governor Roosevelt's decree abolishing the Prison Welfare League, administered by and for convicts, is the only evidence of the iron heel. Amazing as it may seem to those who favor combating violence with retaliation in kind, the parole laws are likely to be extended.

Senator Baumes, author of the Baumes law, favors a permanent parole commission on full time, to aid in the rehabilitation of prisoners.

Commissioner George W. Alger, a profound penologist, declares it is "wholly unfair to conclude from the results that parole has been tried and found wanting." As to administration of the parole law he says: "The transition from prison to the world outside prison walls should never be made without a parole period, not only as an aid to reform but to observe whether a given case is one for

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who devote full time are making \$6 to \$9 a day. Big money made in spare time. Largest concern of its kind in the world. Nearly 2 million dollars profit earned by our Representatives last year taking orders for ZANOL Pure Food Products, Toilet Preparations, Soaps, Cleansers, Polishes and Household Supplies. Get your share of this big money. New Ford Tudor Sedan offered as bonus, in addition to big cash profits. Write today.

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ultimate freedom, permanent imprisonment or permanent custodial care."

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Stop craving tobacco in any form. Tobacco Redeemer in most cases relieves all craving for it in a few days' time. Don't try to quit the tobacco habit unaided. It's often a losing fight against heavy odds, and may mean a distressing shock to the nervous system. Let Tobacco Redeemer help the habit to quit you. Tobacco users usually can depend upon this help by simply using Tobacco Redeemer according to simple directions. It is pleasant to use, acts quickly, and is thoroughly reliable.

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HAVE you ever experienced the thrill of true love or didn't you recognize it when it came? Can you tell when a person really loves you? Is your love-life unhappy because you don't know the vital, fundamental facts about life? Are there certain questions about your sex-life you would like to ask your family physician? If you want the mysteries of sex explained clearly and frankly, clip and mail the coupon below at once.



Learn the Truth About Life

How long must we be slaves to prudery? Will you let "false modesty" rob you of the right to understand the greatest force of life? Why continue to stumble along in ignorance—making costly mistakes that may wreck your happiness—when it is so easy to learn the truth about sex? Thanks to Dr. B. G. Jefferis, Ph. D., a large 512-page book—"Safe Counsel"—has been written that explains in easy-to-understand language the things you should know about your body, your desires and your impulses. It answers the questions that brides want to know on the eve of their wedding—that youths approaching manhood demand of their elders—that married people should know. The real facts are told—frankly and truthfully. Over 100 illustrations explain many subjects that have long puzzled you.

Every Bridegroom Should Avoid, Private Words to Maidens, Answers to Sex Questions, The Art of Happy Marriages, Diseases and Disorders—What to Do, The Social Evil, Advice to Expectant Mothers, Childbirth—and scores of other intimate subjects. You owe it to yourself to get direct, first-hand knowledge on sex matters. Don't let another day pass until you get a copy of this great book.

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If you may be out when the postman calls, send \$2.00 cash with order and we will pay the postage.

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Solution to
on the
(Continued from page 66)

1. A guest stole the Elgin emerald from the japanned box which the owner, Stephen Lorian, had left carelessly upon the living-room table. (Credit 5.)

2. The thief was Miss Charlotte Grainger, (as indicated by the telltale thumbmark on the rim of the inside of the cover of the japanned box. (Credit 5.)

Charlotte Grainger's thumbprint was the only one which was identical in its ridge markings with the thumbprint on the japanned box cover.

The distinctive feature of both prints is the arch formation of the ridges.

The ridges are classified according to types—loops, whorls, arches. For instance, Colonel Blue's thumbprint would be classified as distinguished by its whorls; that of Mr. Hay by its loops; and Charlotte Grainger's was the only one distinguished by its arches.

The dangerous aftermath of Stephen Lorian's private investigation into the disappearance of his emerald was no fault of his. The unfortunate girl, whose kleptomaniacal impulses were unknown even to her uncle and aunt, Mr. and Mrs. Archibald Hay, was herself the cause of the unpleasant publicity which the whole case received. Lorian refrained from broaching his shocking discovery to the girl's uncle until she and the Hays had returned to the Hay home. Her uncle decided to search her room. The niece, coming upon her uncle just as he had located the missing jewel in her dresser, flew at him in a desperate assault and seriously injured him with a paper cutter which she had snatched up. Every effort was made to hush up the affair, but it was revealed to the police through the servants who had suffered from the girl's ungovernable bursts of temper. It was this that forced the Hays to agree to her confinement in a private sanitarium. The Hays, it must be recorded, placed no blame whatever upon Lorian for his methods in detecting the theft.

DO YOU KNOW

How to woo to win?
How to keep love aflaming?
What every girl should know?
Ethics of the unmarried?
How to perpetuate the honeymoon?
The mistakes every couple should avoid?
How to control your impulses?
What kind of women make the best wives?
What men love in women?
The kind of a man that always attracts women?
Why petting is dangerous?
How to fascinate the other sex?
What every young man should know?

Answers Questions Frankly

"Safe Counsel" discusses the most intimate problems of your life. This big book has 512 pages—10 Special Sections—109 Subdivisions—each treating a different phase of the sex question. Here are a few of the subjects discussed: The Power and Peculiarities of Love, Advice to Newly Married Couples, Anatomy and Physiology, Birth Control, Secrets of Marriage, Sex Determination, At What Age to Marry, When to Set the Wedding Date, How to Win and Hold Love, Mistakes

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Are you hunting a bigger job, or does the bigger job hunt you? Why waste years learning through routine work, when you can acquire at home in a comparatively few months the specialized knowledge which brings promotion and salary increase? Thousands of men have increased their incomes by home-study business training under the

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Roll your own and save money. Better and quicker; saves more than half. Use your favorite brand of tobacco. No heat, no smoke, handy, pocket size, weighs 45 cts. Made entirely of metal, nickel plated. 25c, 3 for 75c postpaid anywhere.

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With a bunch of these bills, it is easy for each person of limited means to appear procacious by flashing a roll of these bills at the proper time and peeling off a genuine bill or two from the outside of the roll, the effect created will be found to be all that can be desired. Prices, postpaid: 40 Bills 25c, 120 for 50c, or \$3.50 thousand postpaid.

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25c
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Radio alone, pays over 200 MILLION DOLLARS a year in wages in Broadcasting, Manufacturing, Sales, Service, Commercial Stations and on board the big sea going ships, and many more men are needed. Television and Talking Movies open up other vast fields of money-making opportunities for ambitious men. Get into this great business that is live, new and up-to-date, where thousands of trained men easily earn \$60 to \$100 a week—where \$10,000 a year jobs are plentiful for men with training plus experience.

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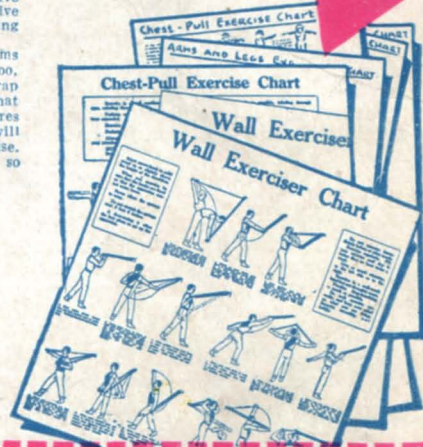
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